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Near East/South Asia Report

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29 SEPTEMBER 1986

NEAR EAST/SOUTH ASIA REPORT

CONTENTS

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Briefs

India-Bangladesh-Nepal Talks 1

ARAB AFRICA

ALGERIA

Briefs

Bendjedid Meets SFRY, Indian Leaders 2
Brahimi Receives UAE Minister 2
Protocol With UAE 2

MAURITANIA

Briefs

CMSN Secretary in Libya 3

ARAB EAST/ISRAEL

KUWAIT

Kuwait Heads Islamic Programs Committee
(AL-QABAS, 9 Jul 86)..... 4

Reduction of Labor Force: Causes, Effects
(Nasrallah Salih al-Nasrallah; AL-QABAS, 8 Jul 86)..... 5

Institute for Scientific Research Contributes to Kuwaitization (AL-QABAS, 15 Jul 86).....	8
--	---

SYRIA

Drought, Erosion Afflict Idlib Province (Muhammad al-Khatib; AL-BA'TH, 19 Jun 86).....	15
Aleppo Markets 35,000 Tons of Barley (Faydallah al-Ghadiri; AL-BA'TH, 19 Jun 86).....	21
Briefs Al-Ba'th Dam Construction	23

SOUTH ASIA

AFGHANISTAN

Fierce Fighting Reported in Qandahar (KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL, 9 Aug 86).....	24
---	----

INDIA

Paper Reports Gandhi Speech at Mexico Summit (THE STATESMAN, 8 Aug 86).....	26
Indian Delegate Addresses Disarmament Conference (THE TELEGRAPH, 14 Aug 86).....	27
Minister Says India Capable of Exporting Defense Items (PATRIOT, 10 Aug 86).....	28
Government Refutes Union Carbide Sabotage Theory (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 12 Aug 86).....	29
CPI-M Leader Rules Out Cooperation With New Party (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 18 Aug 86).....	30
Delhi Concerned Over Communal Politics, Secessionists (G. K. Reddy; THE HINDU, 14 Aug 86).....	31
Gandhi's Office Reported To Edit President's Speech (THE TELEGRAPH, 18 Aug 86).....	32
Gandhi Plans To Review Government Functioning (G. K. Reddy; THE HINDU, 10 Aug 86).....	33
Gurkha Problems Bring Strain Between Center, Punjab (G. K. Reddy; THE HINDU, 19 Aug 86).....	34

Gandhi Interview With ALGERIE (AFP, 30 Aug 86).....	35
Defense Officials Concerned Over Security Environment (G. K. Reddy; THE HINDU, 17 Aug 86).....	37
Second Generation Launch Vehicle Ready This Year (PATRIOT, 12 Aug 86).....	39
Lok Sabha Passes Bill To Set Up National Guard (THE TELEGRAPH, 21 Aug 86).....	41
Minister Notes 'Unfriendly Acts' by Pakistan (THE STATESMAN, 13 Aug 86).....	42
Pakistan Actions Belie Congratulatory Message (V. T. Joshi; THE TIMES OF INDIA, 21 Aug 86).....	43
Tribals Plan Movement for Jharkhand State (THE TELEGRAPH, 11 Aug 86).....	45
Soviet Visitor: Imperialists Plot Against India (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 20 Aug 86).....	46
Press Briefed on Armored Corps Training Program (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 19 Aug 86).....	47
MNF Coalition Ministry Installed in Mizoram (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 22 Aug 86).....	48
Tripura Front Panel Fails To Endorse Mizoram Accord (THE STATESMAN, 12 Aug 86).....	49
Papers Report Developments in Mizoram (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 19 Aug 86; THE TELEGRAPH, 18 Aug 86).....	50
MNF Ban Lifted	50
MNF Members' Cases Withdrawn	51
Accord Signed With France on Gas Pipeline Project (Latika Padgaonkar; THE TELEGRAPH, 11 Aug 86).....	52
ONGC Cancels Tenders for Offshore Drilling (G. K. Pandey; THE TIMES OF INDIA, 13 Aug 86).....	53
Delayed Monsoon Threatens Northwestern Grain Crop (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 17 Aug 86).....	54

IRAN

Acting Energy Minister, Italian Official Discuss Ties (IRNA, 30 Aug 86).....	55
Moscow Talks Seen by Official as Promising (MEED/THE MIDDLE EAST'S BUSINESS WEEKLY, 16-22 Aug 86).....	56
Restoration of Economic Links With Moscow Discussed (Vahe Petrossian; MEED/THE MIDDLE EAST'S BUSINESS WEEKLY, 30 Aug-5 Sep 86).....	57
Regime 'Will Not Borrow' Despite Economic Problems (MEED/THE MIDDLE EAST'S BUSINESS WEEKLY, 30 Aug-5 Sep 86).. <td>59</td>	59
Intensification of Air War With Iraq (Vahe Petrossian; MEED/THE MIDDLE EAST'S BUSINESS WEEKLY, 16-22 Aug 86).....	60
Opposition Paper Cites Factors 'Threatening Regime' (London KEYHAN, 31 Jul 86).....	62
Physicians' Strike	62
People's Discontent	63
Afghan Islamic Leaders Hold News Conference (Tehran Domestic Service, 30 Aug 86).....	65
Shah's Son, Ex-Premier Optimistic About Country's Future (London KEYHAN, 31 Jul 86).....	66
Release of Physicians Demanded by Amnesty International (London KEYHAN, 1 Aug 86).....	69
Tehran Cites Musavi-Ardebili on Legal Issues (Tehran Domestic Service, 1 Sep 86).....	73
People To Be Watched at Home by Mosque-Appointed Agents (London KEYHAN, 31 Jul 86).....	75
Absence of Freedom of Press Noted (London KEYHAN, 31 Jul 86).....	77
Regime To Apply Religious Regulations for Men's Wear (London KEYHAN, 24 Jul 86).....	81
Briefs	
Imports Value Decline	84

/12223

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

BRIEFS

INDIA-BANGLADESH-NEPAL TALKS--His majesty's government of Nepal has replied to the governments of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the Republic of India, expressing its readiness to receive Indo-Bangladesh joint committee of experts to hold discussions on water resources on the basis of mutual benefit at a time convenient to all the parties. This is in accordance with his majesty's government's policy to remain effortful in promoting joint endeavors in the development of vast water resources for the mutual benefits of all the countries in the region, especially our neighboring countries through regional cooperation while keeping Nepal's interests above all. Identical letters to this effect were officially handed over today to the ambassadors of Bangladesh and India by acting foreign secretary [name indistinct]. [Text] [Katmandu External Service in English 1415 GMT 29 Aug 86 BK] /9738

CSO: 4600/502

ALGERIA

BRIEFS

BENDJEDID MEETS SFRY, INDIAN LEADERS--At his residence in Harare, President Chadli Bendjedid has held talks on bilateral issues and those of mutual interest with the president of Yugoslavia and then with the Indian prime minister. [Text] [Algiers Domestic Service in French 1830 GMT 31 Aug 86 LD] /12232

BRAHIMI RECEIVES UAE MINISTER--3 September (APS)--Prime Minister Abdelhamid Brahimi, alternate member of the Politburo, today received Sayf ibn 'ali al-jarwan, UAE minister of economy and trade. The talks which were attended by Finance Minister Abdelaziz Khellef, member of the FLN Central Committee, dealt with all aspects of bilateral cooperation and ways of bolstering it in an effort to promote Arab economic integration. [Text] [Algiers APS in Arabic 1530 GMT 3 Sep 86 LD] /12232

PROTOCOL WITH UAE--Following the completion of work of the Algerian-United Arab Emirates Joint Commission, a protocol was signed today in Algeria by Finance Minister Abdelaziz Khellef and Sayf 'Ali al-Jarwan, minister of the economy and trade in the United Arab Emirates. On this occasion, brother Abdelaziz Khellef saluted the results of the meetings of this second session. Al-Jarwan, for his part, explained that his presence in Algeria, and that of the delegation accompanying him, represented proof of the will for cooperation between the two countries. He confirmed the need to achieve the objectives laid down by the second session of the joint commission in order to continue to move forward in the field of cooperation between the two countries. [Excerpt] [Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 3 Sep 86 LD] /12232

CSO: 4500/207

MAURITANIA

BRIEFS

CMSN SECRETARY IN LIBYA--Lieutenant Colonel Mohamed Sidina Ould Sidiya, the CMSN permanent secretary, has returned home from Tripoli where he represented our country at the festivities that marked the 17th anniversary of the 1 September Revolution. The CMSN permanent secretary was received by Major 'Abd as-Salam Jallud to whom is conveyed the greetings of Colonel Maaouiya Sid 'Ahmed Oul Taya, CMSN chairman and head of state, for the leader of the Libyan revolution, Colonel al-Qadhdhafi. The CMSN permanent secretary, Mohamed Sidina Oul Sidiya, also held discussions with some heads of delegations who were present in the Libyan capital. The discussions centered on the (?development of the cooperation existing between our country and each of the friendly countries, whose heads of delegations he met with. [Text] [Nouakchott Domestic Service in French 0730 GMT 6 Sep 86 AB] /12232

CSO: 4500/206

KUWAIT

KUWAIT HEADS ISLAMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 9 Jul 86 p 4

[Article: "Dr 'Abd-al-'Aziz to Head Committee"]

[Text] The program committee of the Broadcast Organization of the Islamic Nations yesterday elected Kuwait to head the committee for a third consecutive 4-year term.

Members of the committee unanimously elected Kuwait's broadcast director, Dr 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mansur, to head the committee for the coming period.

Dr Mansur has occupied the chairmanship of this committee since its formation.

It was reported that the program committee is holding its meetings within the framework of a number of meetings convened by the organization last week, including meetings of the administrative and financial committee, the general assembly, and the organization's executive council.

Kuwait is being represented in these meetings by the program director of the Broadcast Organization, 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Hadi, due to fact that the deputy minister of information and assistant for administrative and financial affairs, Fahd al-Hudayb', and the director of the Broadcast Organization, Dr 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mansur, excused themselves from attending the meetings because of work commitments.

13286/12948
CSO: 4404/422

KUWAIT

REDUCTION OF LABOR FORCE: CAUSES, EFFECTS

Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 8 Jul 86 p 7

[Analysis by Nasrallah Salih al-Nasrallah]

[Text] At first glance, it appears that the employee dismissal measures taken by several governmental ministries, such as the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Business, are nothing more than administrative measures intended to limit administrative expenditures, particularly expenditures for salaries. (Approximately 2,000 or more employees were dismissed from the Ministry of Education, and those dismissed from the Ministry of Business total 750.)

It seems to me, however, that the matter has other political and social implications. The desire to decrease the ministries' costs and expenditures is part of a government quest to adapt to the decrease in government revenues which has occurred during the last few years. There are numerous internal and external factors which have contributed to the decrease of governmental revenues, the most important of which are:

1. The continual reduction of oil prices from 1983 to the present. During this period, the price of 1 barrel of oil dropped to U.S. \$16-18 compared to U.S. \$30-34 between 1979 and 1981. As a result of this decrease in oil prices, Kuwait was compelled to reduce its oil production to less than 1 million barrels per day during the past 2 years.
2. The worldwide reduction of interest rates which led in turn to a reduction of the country's foreign investment returns.
3. The reduction of the reexport share of neighboring countries, such as Iraq, to a growth rate of 5.2 percent in 1982 and 28.9 percent in 1983 compared to an average annual growth rate of 38.9 percent from 1979 to 1981.
4. The most important of these factors is al-Manakh Market crisis. This crisis has shaken the foundations of the Kuwaiti economy, and attempts to resolve it have usurped the lion's share of the efforts of the government and the private sector. As a result of al-Manakh Market crisis, the total value of checks on which payment was deferred was 28 billion Kuwaiti dinars as of September 20, 1982, when the government suspended transactions with these checks.

The expected result of the free-for-all generated by these factors vis a vis the Kuwaiti economy was the appearance of a deficit in the general budget from fiscal year 1982-83 to the present. The budget deficit for fiscal year 1984-85 is estimated to be approximately 704.1 billion Kuwaiti dinars, which is a 4.6 percent increase over the budget deficit recorded for fiscal year 1983-84. The government was therefore compelled to reduce its expenditures in order to reduce the budget deficit. Reports published by the Central Bank state that from 1979-80 to 1983-84, the sum total of general domestic expenditures amounted to 15,303,200,000 Kuwaiti dinars, of which 55 percent were for running expenditures, and 44.3 percent were for salaries and wages.

The government apparently wishes to reduce the proportion of salaries and wages as a means to reduce the budget deficit, especially in view of the fact that expenditures for salaries and wages paid by the Ministry of Education constituted 83 percent of that ministry's total expenditures and approximately 30.2 percent of the expenditures for all salaries and wages in the entire country (in 1984-85). On the other hand, salaries and wages paid by the Ministry of Business constituted 31.5 percent of that ministry's expenditures and only approximately 2 percent of all expenditures for salaries and wages in the country during the same fiscal year.

With regard to the number of employees in each of these ministries, there are approximately 51,956 employees in the Ministry of Education and 4,246 employees in the Ministry of Business. The proportion represented by the number of employees in each of these ministries in relation to the total number of workers in government agencies (except for those with independent budgets) is approximately 33 percent for the Ministry of Education and 2 percent for the Ministry of Business (according to 1984 statistics). One can note that these percentages are similar to those pertaining to the salaries and wages of these ministries on the national level. We do not intend to compare between these two ministries because they differ from each other with respect to the nature of their work, size, and capabilities. Our intention is to use them as examples in the context of our topic because they were the first ministries to announce dismissal measures recently and because it is expected that other ministries, such as the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Labor, will follow their example.

It seems to me that these dismissal measures have a political character in addition to their economic character. It may be the case that these measures will facilitate the realization of numerous political goals of the government, such as the desire to reinstate the balance between the Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti populations, increase the proportion of Kuwaitis in government agencies and ministries, impose greater control in internal security matters, provide greater opportunities for Kuwaitis to assume vacant positions, and reduce the pressure on schools, universities, hospitals, and health facilities.

On the social level, the dismissal movement will have a noticeable influence on the composition of Kuwaiti society and could lead to a change in the outlook of Kuwaiti society in regard to professional trades because the exodus of foreign tradesmen will create a vacuum which Kuwaitis must inevitably fill.

As for the economic implications, these measures will, to some extent, mitigate the financial burden borne by the government in different areas, such as health, education, and transportation. This is especially the case given that the majority of those to be dismissed are expected to depart with their families upon leaving their jobs (termination of residentship). Under these circumstances, the government will not be compelled to build new schools, and may even reduce their number on occasion. The situation is the same with regard to the construction of hospitals and the accompanying reduction in expenditures for items required by schools and hospitals. In addition, a reduction of the amount of funds leaving the country by way of salary remittances to other countries is also expected.

At present, the Arab immigrant community comprises approximately 42.3 percent of Kuwait's total population compared with Kuwaitis, who comprise 42.3 percent; the Asian immigrant community, which comprises 10 percent; and miscellaneous immigrant communities, which comprise 1 percent of the population. The Arab immigrant community is the most exposed of these immigrant communities to dismissal measures because of its large size. If the government wishes to reinstate some kind of balance with respect to Kuwait's population, consideration must be given to the necessity of a comprehensive study of the extent to which these measures will have an impact on Kuwait, especially its economy, before dismissals become widespread in the ministries. Such consideration is needed because the dismissal measures are expected to present some negative complications in relation to Kuwait's economy. Under the circumstances generated by these measures, it is anticipated that most Arab and foreign residents will abstain from the purchase of luxury items in order to save money as a precautionary measure in case they have to depart on short notice. Such a development might cause an increase in the inventories of commercial companies and institutions and a consequent decrease in overall demand for market commodities and products. This will in turn result in economic stagnation and will add new concerns at the expense of the already troubled Kuwaiti economy. Under the conditions generated by the dismissals, landlords are expected to experience a decrease in their revenues as a result of the expected increase in the number of unrented apartments. This will in turn compel landlords to reduce rental fees. Losses are also expected to occur in the area of transportation because of fewer riders.

In summary, the issue of dismissals has divergent aspects and affects every citizen in this country. It is therefore hoped that this issue will be reexamined and studied in a thorough and adequate manner.

13286/12948
CSO: 4404/422

KUWAIT

INSTITUTE FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH CONTRIBUTES TO KUWAITIZATION

Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 15 Jul 86 p 2

[Article: "Plan to Develop National Technical Labor Force"]

[Text] The Institute of Kuwait for Scientific Research has formulated a series of plans and programs to develop the indigenous technical labor force at the institute and prepare a new generation of researchers.

The institute's efforts to prepare a generation of native researchers, and to formulate and implement plans and programs aimed at attracting domestic technical abilities in order gradually to replace the foreign labor force, in a scientific and carefully studied manner, have been crowned with success. These efforts have produced solid scientific cadres and a qualified indigenous administration which can assume its full responsibilities and contribute effectively to the country's push for development and progress.

The report indicated the most important manifestations of the success of the institute's efforts:

- An increase in the number and proportion of Kuwaiti workers at the institute (especially in scientific research fields) over the past 10 years.
- A decrease in the average annual number of resignations of the indigenous labor force during the past 3 years, and a reduction of this turnover compared to the turnover of the foreign labor force.
- An increase in the number of Kuwaitis appointed annually at the institute.
- An increase in the number of qualified Kuwaiti leaders.

The institute presented some information and statistics which corroborate the above conclusions:

1. Kuwaitis comprise 32.1 percent of the 983 permanent employees presently at the institute. This percentage is considered high, given the fact that the percentage of permanent Kuwaiti employees at the institute 10 years ago (1972) did not exceed 14 percent (see figure 1).

2. Kuwaitis comprise 9.4 percent of the 286 temporary workers currently at the institute.

3. Kuwaitis comprise 47 percent of the institute's scientific cadres working in research and research support technologies (computers, analytical laboratories, scientific workshops, and information science).

Development Programs and Plans

The report states that the process of preparing a generation of native Kuwaiti researchers and developing an indigenous technical labor force received special attention at an early date so that this process would achieve the goals for which the Institute of Kuwait for Scientific Research was established. In 1978, a special department for training was established at the institute. It was charged with the following tasks:

- To attract and develop native elements to replace other elements, within the framework of a well-considered, scientific plan, especially in different areas of scientific research and research support technologies (computers, information science, technical workshops, and analytical laboratories).
- To encourage youth to engage in scientific research through appropriate training programs prepared especially for this purpose.
- To support cooperation with local and Gulf institutions in the field of labor force development.

In 1979, the training department formulated detailed, long-range plans to realize the goals explained above, especially the attraction of native Kuwaitis to work at the institute. These plans provide for the designation of 40 Kuwaiti graduates a year to undergo scientific and functional development in various training courses in Kuwait and abroad through foreign study missions and academic leaves. The institute's board of trustees allocated funds to implement these plans at the appropriate time.

In subsequent time, these plans began to be implemented and a special program was created to develop graduates. Appropriate training programs were also prepared within the framework of functional development to ensure the integration and mutual correspondence of the institute's programs and plans with the individual aspirations of the native technical workforce. Within the space of the last few years, the institute has been able to make good progress in the realization of these aspirations through the provision of native technical cadres in the fields of research, research support, and scientific administration. The following is a summary of the training programs which are being implemented at the institute.

1. Internal Training Program

This program includes a number of intensive training courses which usually last several days or a number of weeks. During these courses, trainees are

provided with the skills and information which are needed to improve their execution of the tasks with which they are charged or to qualify them for other positions within the framework of the domestic, functional development plans which pertain to them. During 1984-85, for example, 55 training courses were held (of which 47 were in scientific and technical fields and computers). About 15 percent of the 840 trainees who attended these courses were from outside the institute.

2. In-service Training Program

This program includes the training of employees on an individual basis at the workplace while they are engaged in actual research programs or simulations prepared especially for training purposes. One of the institute's researchers supervises the training, and observations and evaluations are carried out periodically in the framework of a plan with defined goals. This training program is the cornerstone for the development of an indigenous labor force in the research and research support fields, especially with regard to the development of those entering the institute for the first time. During the past 4 years, a total of 107 trainees completed this program. Their training period is estimated to be approximately 2,264 man-weeks.

3. Local Training

The report added that employees are occasionally required to train in domestic institutions (government and national) for a specific period for the purpose of perfecting specific skills which cannot be acquired at the institute. This type of training primarily concerns the training of engineers in industrial establishments and language training.

4. External Training Program

The external training program aims to provide trainees with up-to-date information and skills in their fields of specialization. It entails the participation of trainees in scientific seminars and conferences and enrollment in training courses abroad at specialized, world-renown scientific institutions so that they can receive training in fields related to on-going or planned research programs at the institute. Table 3 shows the number of trainees in this program and the percentage of expenditures for the Kuwaiti trainees among them for the period covering the last 5 years.

5. Academic Degree Study Program (Foreign Study and Academic Leaves)

In order to prepare a generation of Kuwaitis, who are highly qualified scientific researchers, the institute early on formulated ambitious plans to send Kuwaitis on foreign study missions and academic leaves so that they could obtain academic degrees in required specialties in accordance with the institute's research plans and programs. During the past 10 years, 108 employees completed their studies and obtained the required academic degrees (16 doctorates, 88 master's degrees, and 4 bachelor's degrees). In addition, there are presently 79 employees engaged in academic studies, and 34 of them are preparing to obtain doctorates.

6. Program To Develop Graduates

This program aims to ensure the graduates' transition from the academic environment, to which they have become accustomed during their years of study at the university, to the environment of applied research in science and technology. The program is primarily intended for science and engineering graduates (its scope is currently being expanded to include graduates in other specialties). It includes elective training programs (as explained above) which accord with the graduates' academic background and the tasks with which they will be charged following the completion of their training. It also includes preparatory programs to acquaint the graduates with the institute's goals, organization, strategies, divisions, programs, and work procedures.

7. Development of Kuwaiti Administrators

Since 1979, the institute has worked to develop Kuwaiti administrators through intensive training courses held at the institute in various administrative fields and through the dispatch of administrators to academic institutions abroad to receive training in the modern principles of scientific research administration. In the middle of 1980, the administrative development program was formulated for Kuwaiti administrators in administrative bureaus and departments and in the central administrative agencies. The program centers on the formulation of plans to develop skills on the basis of an analysis of specific employment positions, a study of the administrative skills and behavior required for these positions, and a comparison of these skills with those of employees occupying these positions or those of candidates for these positions. Appropriate training is then provided to close the gaps in the skills of workers.

The administrative development program has made great strides, given that the study and analysis of 20 administrative positions have now been completed. It is hoped that plans for the development of 20 program heads and administrators of research and research support departments and agencies will be formulated by the end of the present year.

8. Programs To Encourage Youth To Engage in Scientific Research

In 1974, the institute began to organize summer training courses for secondary school and university students in order to realize one of the goals for which it was established. These courses include all types of scientific research courses designed especially to accord with the students' scientific abilities; scientific lecture programs; cultural, athletic, and social activities; and field trips. The number of participants in these courses during the course of the past 10 years totals 744 male and female students. Participants in the program's 10th session (held in the summer of 1985) totaled 103 students. Preparations are currently underway for the 11th summer training session to be held this summer, and it is expected that some 140 male and female students will participate.

All indications point to the great success of these courses, given the continually increasing number of participants in them (see Table 4). These courses also enjoy the support of government and national institutions. In the light of this success, a fourth training course in microcomputers was established for the first time in January, 1982. Its participants included 24 male and female Kuwaiti students.

9. Training of Cadres from Outside the Institute

The institute devotes close to 25 percent of its training efforts to the development of cadres working in domestic institutions (government and national) and the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

The institute's role in this domain is not limited to the provision of external cadres with the opportunity to participate in in-house training courses organized by the institute. Rather, the institute goes beyond this to prepare and implement in-service training programs in its laboratories and workshops under the supervision of its researchers and specialists. The institute also prepares and implements training programs for national institutions in order to meet the training needs of their cadres. For example, the implementation of the first phase of a training program for the technical cadres of the Kuwait municipality was recently celebrated. This program included 66 trainees, the majority of whom are engineers. More than 85 percent of them are Kuwaitis. This course was palpably successful, and planning for the implementation of the second and third phases of this program is currently underway.

Third, average turnover (resignation) of the native labor force during the past 2 years:

1. The number of Kuwaitis who submitted their resignations from the institute during the last 2 years (1983-84 and 1984-85) totaled 32 employees. This number represents an average annual turnover in the Kuwaiti labor force of approximately 5.5 percent. This average is considered a reduction compared to:

- A. The annual average (or median) turnover of the foreign labor force for the same period, which is 10.5 percent (see Table 2).

- B. The annual average turnover of the Kuwaiti labor force in previous years (this average totaled 8.5 percent in 1983).

2. Statistics and analytical studies of the turnover of the Kuwaiti workforce from the year 1985-86 until the present, in addition to indications provided by the final quarter of 1985-86, indicate that the average turnover of the Kuwaiti labor force will continue to decrease during the fourth quarter and that it is not expected to exceed a annual average of 4 percent.

3. It can be observed from Table 2 that the annual average turnover of the Kuwaiti labor force was continually less than that of foreign workers. This clearly indicates the existence of a direct relation between the average

labor force turnover (Kuwaiti and foreign labor alike) and several main factors, such as the economic conditions in the country, available work opportunities outside the institute, external incentives that attract the labor force, and other factors.

Fourth, the number of Kuwaitis applying to work at the institute (during 1984-1985 and 1985-1986), the number of workers who were accepted, and the number of vacancies:

This table indicates the number of Kuwaitis who applied to work at the institute, the number of those among them who received appointments, and the number of vacant positions during last year (1984-85) and the current year (1985-86). It shows that the number of Kuwaiti appointees from the previous year by 48 percent.

Fifth, administrators of offices and departments in the institute's scientific divisions:

The number of Kuwaiti administrators of departments and offices in scientific (research) divisions currently totals 9 administrators, which is 45 percent of the total number of 20 administrators in these divisions of the institute. In this regard, the scientific and administrative preparation of a greater number of indigenous cadres in recent years has led to an increase in the proportion of Kuwaiti administrative officers in relation to the total number of administrators in scientific divisions.

A review of the following table illustrates a steady increase in this proportion, given the fact that in fiscal year 1985-86 it increased one and a half times compared to what it was in 1983-84. At present, additional Kuwaitis are undergoing training in preparation for appointments to leadership and administrative positions in the coming year, 1986-87.

This table shows the number and proportion of Kuwaiti administrators of research departments and agencies for 1983-84 through 1985-86.

Preparation of Trainees Abroad and Percentage of Costs for Training Kuwaitis

Percentage of costs for training Kuwaitis in relation to sum total of allocations for training abroad	No. of trainees	Year
87	61	1980-81
71	118	1981-82
81	103	1982-83
77	86	1983-84
87	88	1984-85
93	48	1985-86 to present

Number of Kuwaiti Graduates in Training Programs While They Work

No. of Trainees		Total		
Funded by budget of Graduate Development Program	Graduates funded by vacancies	No. of trainees	Training period (man-weeks)	Year
25	4	29	686	1982-83
22*	--	22	642	1983-84
--	14	14	257	1984-85
24	18	42	679	1985-86 to present

*The budget for this program was not funded in 1984-85.

Internal Training Programs

Explanation	Computer science/technology	Administration/language	Total
No. of courses	47	8	55
No. of trainees from within institute	590	127	717
Trainees from outside institute	123	--	123
In-house training of workers estimated in man-weeks	209	65	274
No. of training hours	730.5	138.5	869

SYRIA

DROUGHT, EROSION AFFLICT IDLIB PROVINCE

Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 19 Jun 86 p 7

[Article by Muhammad al-Khatib]

[Text] Idlib Province is considered to be one of the provinces with limited acreage, compared to others, since its agricultural holdings have been distributed according to general inheritance laws and land reform laws, and today most of these holdings have come to be limited in size. In addition, there are not inconsiderable areas in hilly and mountainous regions and in pastures. Thus, the overall area of the province is 609,710 hectares, of which 55 percent is utilized, and 25 percent is nonarable, and 20 percent consists of wooded lands and pastures. Moreover, the province in and of itself is considered to have limited water resources compared to other provinces, since its sources of water have begun to decline noticeably. Therefore, there is the urgent need for every foot of arable land to be utilized and for production on a unit of area to be increased, using the available sources of water in a scientific and studied manner.

Rainwater

The lands of Idlib Province lie within the following rain catchment regions:

- a. The First Rain Catchment Region, which constitutes 75 percent of the area of the province.
- b. The Second Rain Catchment Region, which constitutes 18 percent of the area of the province.
- c. The Third Rain Catchment Region, which constitutes 7 percent of the area of the province.

Average rainfall varies from one region to the next, and sometimes it varies within a single region. Generally, average rainfall in the province varies between 300 mm and 600 mm. Thus, these rains are still the principal source of water for watering crops, in addition to the other sources, which are directly affected by the availability of rainfall, whether it be plentiful or in short supply. Therefore, the horizontal development of the agricultural sector is affected to a great extent by rainfall averages, whereas

the vertical development of this sector requires that exploitation of croplands be adjusted to these rainfall averages, whether in crop planning or in its implementation through the use of the rainwater that can be saved according to the demands of modern science, both underground in the water table and aboveground in surface dams and reservoirs. Even if the modern goals have taken a specific turn, whether it be towards directing the proper consumption of irrigation water or searching for other sources of water, these goals are still limited to water from springs, wells and rivers within the government projects; therefore, they require hard work and large technical and material capabilities with respect to the exploitation of rainwater, which is still limited in Idlib Province and does not go beyond winter rain-fed farming.

Even though it might be difficult to get the maximum benefit out of other sources of water because of the scarcity of these sources, their decline in level, and the hilly and mountainous nature of the lands surrounding most of them, it should be possible to benefit as much as possible from the available rainwater in spite of the hilly and mountainous nature of the land. That could be a helping factor in benefitting from these rains, which go to waste down the valleys and slopes to sink finally into the depths of the earth, far even from the groundwater basins in most cases.

For example, there is Wadi al-Haris, along which the water flows for dozens of kilometers to settle finally in the location of al-Simah, causing the ground to flood and the winter crops to be inundated, and there are many similar occurrences in various districts of the province. Moreover, good agricultural soil and crops are washed away. Rainwater flowing down from Jabal al-Zawiyah floods a lot of cropland in al-Ruj plain, causing a portion of the grain crop there to be inundated. It is the same in the districts of Salqayn, Harim, and Idlib, where the area of cropland which is subject to annual flooding because of the rains is 3,120 hectares. Doubtless this causes great losses in the production of grain, the consumption of which increases day by day as the need for it grows urgent.

How Can We Benefit From the Rainwater?

Even if it is obvious that rainwater plays an important role in watering the winter crops, there are other means by which the maximum benefit possible might be obtained from that water, thereby achieving a greater increase in the yield of an area and preventing a portion of the winter crops from being flooded, in addition to achieving other benefits that would have a direct impact on the saving of other sources of irrigation water. That should be done instead of allowing the rainwater to go to waste when there is an urgent need for every drop of water to be used for agriculture and drinking. Then why do we allow these waters to course down the valleys, instead of watering crop lands with them when needed?

These questions are answered by Engineer 'Abd-al-Karim al-Hajj al-Qasim, the general director, who said:

There are several ways whereby rainwater might be utilized. Most important of these is the building of surface storage dams, in which the water would be saved for irrigating summer crops and even the winter ones when there is not enough rain.

Another alternate solution would be to build surface "sectional" dams if the technical and material capabilities were not available for building storage dams. This would make it possible to feed the water table in the water-bearing layers of the ground and avoid the harm caused by winter torrents and floods. In addition, it would be possible to irrigate summer crops, and thus it would be possible to revive the waters of wells and springs.

Engr Hajj Qasim added that it might be possible to build more than 10 surface dams, and this action would raise the level of underground water, or at least stabilize it at what it is now or augment the underground source of water, thus making available good water bearers in Idlib Province. The decline that is occurring now is in the surface water bearers, and is greater than in the underground bearers, because the former depend on rainwater as their source.

The need to build such dams has become urgent, because if we compare the lands of Idlib Province to some other provinces, we would see that these provinces are richer than it in water, since constant sources of water flow through them, such as the Euphrates, al-Khabur, and al-'Asi rivers. So far there has been no water project in Idlib Province situated on a river; rather the current projects are limited to underground water. In order to preserve what water can be stored in the ground of the province, well-digging operations must be done under government supervision, scientific facts must be applied in discovering the water reservoirs, and random digging not based on any studied scientific direction must be discontinued.

Where Do the Waters of al-'Asi Go?

Al-'Asi River passes through part of the lands of the districts of Jisr al-Shughur and Harim, where the waters of this river continue on until they enter the lands of the Idlib Province. Throughout the area crossed by the river in this province, its waters are not utilized as they should be, even though there are important tributaries to this river within the province, most importantly the springs of 'Ayn al-Zarqa, whose waters flow at a rate of 5 cubic meters per second. There are also other tributaries in Darkush and east of the river's course, from which 1,365 hectares are irrigated, while the rest of the water goes to waste, even though there is an urgent need for it for irrigating the croplands surrounding al-'Asi River's course and the plain of al-Ruj project close to the river. Therefore, the need for water demands that the concerned parties get involved in carrying out the necessary projects on this river and pumping its waters to irrigate the crop lands, where the limited capabilities of the farmers have prevented their exploitation of this water up until now. Engr Hajj Qasim believes that several dams should be built along the river, the first of which should be above the site of 'Ayn al-Zarqa springs for irrigating the plains of

al-Ziyadibah and Farikah. The waters of these springs would then be used for drinking and irrigating the crop lands below the springs in the plains of Darkush and Salqayn. Moreover, within the proposed project the springs of 'Ayn al-Zarqa can be used to augment the water project of Idlib-Ariha and the adjacent villages, in addition to augmenting some of the other drinking water projects, especially since these projects' overall water requirement will be about 1.5 cubic meters per second by the year 2010, whereas the current need is 0.8 cubic meters per second. Using the waters of the springs of 'Ayn al-Zarqa for these projects will reflect positively on the water reservoir in the water-bearing layers that are exploited for drinking water.

Engineer Ahmad Sammaq, director of Idlib agriculture, in his reports that he has presented on the subject believes that the matter requires that practical hydro-logical studies be carried out on the waters of al-'Asi River from the point where it enters Syrian territory as well as its tributaries. The matter also requires that appropriate sites be selected along the course of this river for storing the water and using it to irrigate large areas of rain-fed land. Moreover, these dams would put a complete end to winter flooding of this river of the crop lands adjacent to its course in the districts of Harim and Jisr al-Shughur.

Artesian Wells Declining

Artesian wells in Idlib Province number about 733, irrigating an area of 6,197 hectares, and there are 402 unlicensed wells. In his studies, the director of Idlib agriculture thinks that the situation of the artesian wells in the province, the random digging, and the imprecise determination of the output of these wells and of the areas that they irrigate by the technical parties concerned with this matter has had a negative impact on the precision of the figures of the production plan for irrigated agriculture in the province. He added that this matter with all its ramifications had been brought up in meetings of the branch agricultural council and the higher agricultural council, but nothing tangible had been done about the situation.

The director of Idlib agriculture added that the discharge capacity of the artesian wells had begun to decline because of their mismanagement as well as their random, unstudied digging, as has occurred in the districts of Saraqib and Hawd al-Ruj. Therefore, the union of agricultural engineers and the director of Idlib agriculture have reiterated in the past year several previous proposals concerning the exploitation of the wells. They are:

- a. To carry out a study of the underground water reservoirs by the concerned establishments in order to determine the water reserves in each reservoir.
- b. To set the number of wells on the reservoirs and their discharge in accordance with the capacity of each reservoir, and to close down the unlicensed wells and toughen the penalties against violators.

c. To conduct a periodic measurement of the wells every year or two during the dryest months (September-October), and to announce the capacity of each well so that it can be licensed according to this capacity.

As for the surface wells, they number about 2,600 in the province, and they irrigate an area of 3,045 hectares. Some of them go dry in the months of June and July, so they are used to irrigate winter and spring crops. The output of the remainder falls to 50 percent, and some summer crops, such as vegetables and cotton, are grown on them in accordance with their remaining irrigational capability. Generally, the director of Idlib agriculture believes that these wells also need to have hydrological studies done on their reservoirs and that unlicensed wells should be closed until a sound plan regarding them is set up.

Al-Ruj Project and Lost Hope

Al-Ruj project is considered to be the only government irrigation project in Idlib Province. The subject of the project has become very complicated, and it is beyond the scope of this article to present all the details pertaining to this project. But whatever the case, we can say that this project was designed to irrigate 2,400 hectares from the three 'Ari springs which feed the project and whose total flow was 1,400 liters per second when the project began. However, a serious decline has been noticed in these sources, and when it was measured in 1984 the flow had come to be 360 liters per second, then in 1985 it fell to 195 liters per second. Moreover, the irrigation canals are getting old and cracking, and subsequently large amounts of water are lost through these cracks. If the project's current situation continues, the experts involved expect that the water reservoir will dry up completely in the not too distant future.

Making matters worse is the presence of a fishery in the project covering an area of 80 hectares based on the same sources of water and needing a flow of 240 liters per second. Briefly it can be said that 90 percent of the area of this project has been turned into dry-land farming, and only 10 percent is irrigated.

Therefore, many party and official parties (technical, agricultural) in the province have called for the studies done on al-Ruj project to be repeated; studies pertaining to the canals, drainage, irrigation and irrigation pathways, agricultural exploitation, etc.

Signs of hope remain in what might be achieved by the visit of the agricultural committees to the province, which got a first-hand look at the situation of this project and the methods of ensuring that the crop-lands be saved from drought and salinization. Foremost of these solutions was to save this project's sources of water for irrigating crop lands and to send the waters of the aforementioned 'Ayn al-Zarqa springs to the cities of Idlib and Ariha and the surrounding villages, which used to depend on al-Ruj water sources for drinking water.

In conclusion, we can say:

There is a shortage of irrigation water in some districts while there is an abundance of water in other districts, but the water is not being utilized as it should be. There are some farmers who complain that their lands are parched in the summer, while there are others who are hurt by the torrents and floods from the rain in the winter.

Most of the lands that are dry or flooded by rains can be utilized and planted to most of the crops of the agricultural plan--crops that cannot be planted under the present circumstances without the drainage of flood waters, the augmentation of the water reservoir, and the storage of rain water and spring water for times of need.

12547/12948

CSO: 4404/434

SYRIA

ALEPPO MARKETS 35,000 TONS OF BARLEY

Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 19 Jun p 4

[Article by Faydallah al-Ghadiri]

[Text] Harvest operations of the barley crop were completed yesterday throughout the province. The amount of this crop that had been marketed to the grain establishment branch as of noon yesterday was 35,000 tons, and marketing operations are continuing. A source in the Directorate of Agriculture told AL-BA'TH that harvest operations for the wheat crop would continue until the end of the first week of next month.

On another subject, between 5 o'clock and 1 o'clock after midnight yesterday, heavy rains fell in several of the province's districts, especially the districts of A'zaz, 'Afrayn, and Kafar Jannah, such as had not been seen by the province before. The rainfall, which turned into streams, was accompanied by waves of hail and thunderstorms which hampered traffic on the roads between the city and these districts.

On another subject, the protection office of the Directorate of Agriculture is continuing its field activities in the olive groves in the province. These are carried out by five roving teams whose task is to observe 10 million olive trees to make sure that they are free from insect and disease infestations. Engineer Walid 'Asi, head of the protection department of the Directorate of Agriculture, told AL-BA'TH that a large number of glass insect traps had been hung in several of the groves in A'zaz and 'Afrayn in order to discover early on any insects that might appear, especially the olive fruit fly, so that combatting operations could be done at the proper time. Eng 'Asi added that preliminary reports coming from the countryside confirmed that the olive trees that had begun to bear fruit were free of pests, except for a few minor infestations of live larvae which had not reached samples of olive fruits in various production locations, which will be dissected to determine the proportion of larvae and pupae in them, if any. As for the cotton crop, the high temperatures over several days during the holidays caused the insects that had appeared in some fields, such as thrips and aphids, to be killed off, and it can be affirmed that so far the cotton crop is free of diseases.

With regard to the insects eating the crops, the head of the protection department mentioned that the opportunities for combatting them had enabled it to contain the locust within the afflicted area in the Manbaj District, an area of only 50 hectares. The measures that have been taken, most importantly the distribution of pesticides to the farmers in the district, have been successful in preventing the spread of the insect to adjacent fields, and there is the possibility that agricultural airplanes might be used in the last stage of cleansing the afflicted hectares, most of which are not cultivated.

With regard to provisioning, the provision patrols, headed by Comrade Mustafa 'Uthman al-Sallum, have been carrying out their task of pursuing saboteurs, price defrauders, and hoarders. The night before yesterday, a tractor-trailer truck without any transport documents for goods was seized on the outskirts of al-Maslamiyah; it had been carrying 40 tons of wheat and was on its way into the city. Seizures also included new amounts of smuggled clothing, sugar, lard, and oil, in addition to a truck carrying 40 tons of smuggled salt. A source in the Directorate of Provisioning reported to AL-BA'TH that the cooperation of the citizens and party comrades with the provisioning control elements had created a new state of stable prices.

12547/12948
CSO: 4404/434

SYRIA

BRIEFS

AL-BA'TH DAM CONSTRUCTION--The public company for land reclamation has completed most of the civil engineering work and hydromechanical arrangements in al-Ba'th hydroelectric dam project, which lies behind the Euphrates Dam at a distance of 27 km. That was mentioned by Comrade Fayiz Bikfalawi, general director of the land reclamation company. He added that in the next few days a large official ceremony would be held at the site of al-Ba'th dam, to be attended by senior officials in the party and the government. It should be mentioned that the length of this dam is around 3 km, and its average width at the summit is 10 meters. The dam consists of a right shoulder, 400 meters long, and an electrical station which has three groups of horizontal turbines, each with a capacity of 25 megawatts and a total capacity of 75 megawatts, and an outlet dam 145 meters long consisting of 10 arched floodgates with a maximum outflow of 8,530 cubic meters per second. This project has been carried out with Syrian Arab labor and expertise, in cooperation with our friends the Soviets. Moreover, the purpose of this dam is to lower the level of the Euphrates River, control its daily flow, and generate electrical power amounting to 375 kwh a year, or a rate of 1:8 of the production of the Euphrates Dam. Thus, this is the second time that the flow of the river has been cut off and its waters channelled through the outlet, following the great historical event that took place in 1973, when the flow of the river was cut off after the great Euphrates Dam was erected. And on this occasion, the comrade general director of the public company announced that the group working in the public company for land reclamation, believing in its great party and in its defending leader Hafiz al-Asad, does everything it can to complete the existing project within the time allotted to them. The comrade general director added that yesterday the public company for land reclamation had promised the symbolic leader that the start of the first main channel for irrigating more than 100,000 hectares of reclaimed land in al-Balikh basin would be opened. Today the promise to him was renewed, concerning this modern and economical installation beginning its effective service. [Text] [Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 18 Jun 86 p 4] 12547/12948

CSO: 4404/434

AFGHANISTAN

FIERCE FIGHTING REPORTED IN QANDAHAR

Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 9 Aug 86 p 5

[Text]

DELHI, Aug. 8 (Dispatches) — Afghan Mujahideen are fighting fierce battles with Soviet and Afghan troops for control of Qandahar, Afghanistan's second largest city, reports said last Tuesday. They said at least 25 civilians died in one clash.

The reports, in separate briefings, also reported clashes in Paghman, about 20 miles (30 km) west of Kabul, where 4,000 Soviet troops are committed, and almost daily rocket attacks and explosions in the capital.

There are an estimated 115,000 Soviet troops supporting the Afghan Army against Muslim freedom fighters.

Large battles took place in the bazaar area of Qandahar on July 15 and 16, the report said, and 25 civilians were killed in artillery fire in one clash.

One report said much of the city, 280 miles (460 km) southwest of Kabul, is now a no-man's land and Soviet and Afghan government forces have control only of the Shani Nau area and a 15-mile (25-km) stretch of road from Qandahar to Takhtapul.

The other report said Afghan and Soviet troops controlled only the airport and the Takhtapul road and said "siege-like conditions" prevailed in the city. It said the Mujahideen are capturing sufficient weapons from Soviet and Afghan troops to continue fighting.

It was reported last week that Mujahideen retook control of Qandahar from government forces.

In Paghman, the reports said fighting continued for the fifth straight week.

The report said 4,000 Soviet troops with heavy equipment had been deployed in the city, which was now a restricted area. One report said four guerrilla commanders were coordinating attacks and sharing intelligence in the area.

In eastern Wardak Province, the guerrillas Thursday attacked a Soviet and Afghan Army convoy on the Kabul-Ghazni highway. It said the Soviet elements at the rear of the motorcade attempted to pull back, but both contingents were hit and three truckloads of casualties were taken to a hospital.

The report said explosions were heard almost daily in the capital last week — the fourth straight week of such reports — and guerrillas fired rockets at areas around the Soviet Embassy and military posts.

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CSO: 4600/513

INDIA

PAPER REPORTS GANDHI SPEECH AT MEXICO SUMMIT

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 8 Aug 86 p 1

[Text]

IXTAPA, Aug. 7.—The six-nation summit on peace and disarmament today urged the leaders of the U.S.A. and Soviet Union to set a date for a new meeting between them for continuing and reinvigorating the dialogue for disarmament which they had started last year, report UNI and PTI.

The meeting made proposals for assisting the two countries in the monitoring of a mutual moratorium or a test ban.

In a document appended to the Mexico declaration, the six countries—India, Argentina, Mexico, Sweden, Greece, and Tanzania—said at the end of the second summit of their leaders that they were prepared to participate in cooperative efforts together with the USA and USSR and take steps to facilitate the achievement of adequate verification arrangements.

Mr Rajiv Gandhi today urged the two superpowers to subscribe to a "binding obligation" on the elimination of nuclear weapons and accept the six-nation proposal for verification of a moratorium on weapon testing.

He pointed out that the six nations, which had launched the initiative for nuclear disarmament, had put forward the proposal to undertake a verification of a moratorium since it was contended that a ban was not feasible in the absence of a credible mechanism for verification.

"Our geographic reach, technological competence and independence of bloc rivalries should command acceptance of the proposal", he told the summit.

The Prime Minister asserted that the non-nuclear powers had an equal stake with the nuclear powers on disarmament as the "fallout of a nuclear war will embrace all.

"Nuclear weapons make no distinction between the aggressive and the peaceful. They have no eyes, no heart, no mind. It is, therefore, our duty as non-nuclear weapon States to exert unremitting pressure on the nuclear weapon powers to negotiate and disarm", he said.

Mr Gandhi regretted that President Reagan and the Soviet leader, Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, had made "little progress" in the 10 months after the Geneva summit to reach their objective of preventing an arms race in space and terminating it on earth.

Mr Gandhi said the six-nation five-continent initiative was a proclamation of the primary rights of humanity—the right to live and have a future.

Referring to the accidents in the shuttle, Challenger, and the Chernobyl reactor, Mr Gandhi said they "remind us of the fallibility of technology".

Attacking attempts at arming space, he said "outer space is the common heritage of all humankind. We cannot acquiesce in its privatization. Certainly, not for the purpose of destroying the earth; weapons in space would be an irreversible extension of the danger".

The U.N. has hailed the initiative taken by India and the five other countries for nuclear disarmament and has offered its assistance and expertise to them in verifying nuclear tests by the superpowers.

/13046
CSO: 4600/1065

INDIA

INDIAN DELEGATE ADDRESSES DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 14 Aug 86 p 3

[Text]

Geneva, Aug 13: India has severely criticised the United Nations for its inability to engage in the collective effort necessary for bringing about disarmament.

Addressing the UN conference on disarmament here today, the head of the Indian delegation, Mr A.S. Gonsalves denounced the "Basic refusal of certain powerful states to accept a multi-lateral approach to disarmament." He said this had reduced the conference to a "mere deliberating body rather than the full-fledged negotiating forum envisaged under its charter."

The conference, which has been meeting annually for more than 20 years, has a United Nations' mandate to bring about complete and general disarmament.

Mr Gonsalves said the "irretrievable drift from the letter and spirit" of the charter was reflected, in the tendency to concentrate on "peripheral rather than central issues," and in the reluctance to establish subsidiary bodies.

Mr Gonsalves also criticised the "trend to unduly stress

issues of regional and conventional disarmament." In his address to the conference last week, the Pakistani foreign minister, Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, had spoken at great length on the importance of a regional approach to disarmament.

Mr Gonsalves questioned the optimism of those states which feel that a convention banning chemical weapons could be presented to the 1987 UN General Assembly. He said it was unlikely in the absence of "mutual confidence and accommodation," and the "continuing sharp differences on verification and other issues" between the United States and the Soviet Union who possess the largest stockpiles.

Mr Gonsalves said no progress had been made on nuclear disarmament, prevention of nuclear war, a nuclear weapon test ban and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. He called for negotiations to eliminate nuclear weapons, to ban all nuclear tests and to prohibit the deployment of weapons in space.

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CSO: 4600/1081

INDIA

MINISTER SAYS INDIA CAPABLE OF EXPORTING DEFENSE ITEMS

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 10 Aug 86 p 5

[Text]

Shimla, Aug 9 (UNI)—India has achieved the capability to export a large number of non-lethal defence items, Minister of State for Defence production Sukh Ram told newsmen here today.

The question of identifying the items, quantum and the countries for their export was under consideration, he said.

He made it clear that while exporting the defence items, India would ensure that the areas of conflict were avoided and world peace maintained.

At present, he said the export of defence items from India was negligible and was only confined to a few countries.

Claiming that India was self-sufficient in the manufacture of weapons and ammunition, Mr Sukh Ram, however, said "no country can claim to be self-sufficient in the field of electronic warfare items including aircraft and

tanks in the present fast changing world of technology".

Referring to the wide range of equipments and materials being manufactured by the eight defence public sector undertakings, he said these undertakings had registered an almost four-time increase in their production from Rs 482 crore in 1980-81 to over Rs 1800 crore in 1985-86.

The Bharat Earth Movers Limited, which manufacture a wide range of sophisticated earth moving equipments, produced equipments and spares worth Rs 490 crore during the last fiscal year. Of this, it exported equipment and spares valued at Rs 21 crore, he added.

Asked about the reported move of the United States to supply Hawk Eye aircraft to Pakistan, he said that India would take necessary steps to continue to maintain its superiority in air force.

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CSO: 4600/1069

INDIA

GOVERNMENT REFUTES UNION CARBIDE SABOTAGE THEORY

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 12 Aug 86 p 1

[Text]

NEW DELHI, August 11.

THE government has denied a fresh allegation by the Union Carbide Corporation, U.S., that the Bhopal gas disaster was an act of sabotage.

The allegation has been publicised by Union Carbide even as the government of India is filing a suit against the company for damages for the gas leak victims before a judge in the Bhopal district court.

If it is not Sikh terrorists then it must be a disgruntled employee of the Bhopal plant, the company has now discovered.

The sabotage theory propounded through a specialised British journal is nothing new, official sources noted.

The Union Carbide chairman, Mr. Warren Anderson, had made a similar allegation after the tragedy in 1984.

The Union Carbide Corporation also brought up this issue in the court of the New York judge, Mr. John Kennan, by seeking to involve Sikh terrorists.

In fact, the New York judge had asked the Carbide lawyers whether they

had any evidence to suggest that the Bhopal disaster was caused by Sikh terrorists. The Carbide lawyer had tried to link the Bhopal gas leak to a chain of terrorist acts like the "Kamishka" crash, the assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi and some other developments.

The judge was not convinced and when the Indian government lawyer tried to repudiate the Carbide arguments, the judge asked him not waste time on the sabotage theory.

In any case, the scientific committee headed by the noted scientist Dr. S. Vardanian, had also examined this aspect and rejected the sabotage theory. It described this allegation to be an "afterthought".

The report pointed out flaws in plant design and maintenance. It said that the presence of sodium in the residue of the tank indicated that some alkali entered the tank. It also indicated the sources of such alkali.

According to the committee, it was clearly improbable that the saboteur would have made two connections leading to the tank, one to the source of the alkali and other to a waterline.

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CSO: 4600/1073

INDIA

CPI-M LEADER RULES OUT COOPERATION WITH NEW PARTY

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 18 Aug 86 p 9

[Text]

TRIVANDRUM, August 17: The CPM general secretary, Mr. E.M.S. Namboodiripad, has ruled out any co-operation between the Left Democratic Front and the Communist Marxist Party (CMP) founded recently by the expelled Marxist leader, Mr. M. V. Raghavan.

The LDF, led by the CPM, will also have nothing to do with the Naxalite and Dange groups.

The CPM leader stated in an article in the party daily, 'Deshabhimani': "In all national and international spheres, the stand of the three groups is opposed to Marxism-Leninism as well as the unity of the left democratic forces."

FIGHTING COMMUNALISM

The statement is considered significant in the context of the Raghavan group's desire for inclusion in the Left Front which includes the CPI, Congress(S), the Revolutionary Socialist Party and the Janata Party.

Mr. Namboodiripad declares: "Whether in respect of the forthcoming poll in Kerala or any movement led by left democratic parties, it is the duty of

every constituent unit of the LDF to oppose without any reservations — and defeat — the Naxal-Dange-Raghavan groups."

"Besides, each of the front partners should take up the responsibility of arraying all sections of the people against the Muslim League, the Kerala Congress, the BJP and the Hindu Munnani (Hindu Front) which represent the Muslim-Christian-Hindu communalism in Kerala."

Referring to Mr. Raghavan's statement that the CMP would contest all the 140 seats in the coming election if it was not included in the Left Front, Mr. Namboodiripad said it showed that the Raghavan group was, wittingly or unwittingly, preparing to actually help the Congress by weaning away at least a small section of Left Front supporters.

As regards question of merger or reunification of the CPM and CMP, Mr. Namboodiripad pointed out that this was not possible without first achieving unity on fundamental theoretical issues. However, there was scope for going ahead with united action by the two parties.

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CSO: 4600/1085

INDIA

DELHI CONCERNED OVER COMMUNAL POLITICS, SECESSIONISTS

Madras THE HINDU in English 14 Aug 86 p 9

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, Aug. 13.

The Centre is keeping a close watch on the communal politics, secessionist activities and regional agitations in different parts of the country, especially in the sensitive border areas, in the wake of the Punjab crisis that has led to widespread political violence taking a heavy toll of innocent lives.

Despite the settlement of the Mizo problem, the activists of regionalism in Tripura, Manipur and Nagaland are indulging in secessionist propaganda to extract more concessions from the Centre in the shape of greater autonomy for their States.

Apart from the on-going agitation in the Darjeeling area for the establishment of a Gorkhaland, there is a demand from the tribal groups in Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh for the creation of a Jharkhand State in the name of safeguarding their special interests.

The Punjab crisis has also been emboldening the pro-Pakistani elements in Kashmir to give a fundamentalist twist to their communal politics to propagate pan-Islamism. There has been a marked stridency in the tone of the Pakistan Radio and television programmes beamed to Kashmir which continue to foment unrest by exaggerating reports of communal clashes like the recent unfortunate events in Gujarat.

Assam agitation: Dissident elements in the Assam student movement have been trying to revive the agitation in one form or the other, despite the fact that the people in the State are sick and tired of it. It has also come to the notice of the Centre that some extremist groups have been trying to acquire arms from

their contacts in the other hill States of the North-eastern region.

During the question hour in Parliament today, the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, intervened to voice his dissatisfaction with the half-hearted manner in which the West Bengal Government has been handling the Gorkhaland agitation. He said the Centre was ready to offer the necessary assistance, but the primary responsibility for coping with this agitation rested with the State Government.

The Minister of State for Internal Security also made a reference to regional agitations and secessionist activities of some extremist groups in different parts of the country, especially in the North-Eastern region. He also stressed that the State Governments were primarily responsible for maintaining law and order, although they were entitled to seek Central assistance in preserving the unity and integrity of the country.

Gross impropriety: The Centre is also taking steps to urge on all State Governments, and also impress up on all political parties concerned, to discourage border disputes erupting into linguistic agitations as it happened recently in Belgaum. It intends to draw their attention to the gross impropriety of ruling parties and State Governments calling bandhs or supporting agitations.

After the Prime Minister's return from the non-aligned summit Conference, the Centre might call a meeting of Chief Ministers to discuss how best they could all cooperate in fighting the forces of violence and disunity that were bent on undermining the integrity of the nation.

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CSO: 4600/1082

INDIA

GANDHI'S OFFICE REPORTED TO EDIT PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 18 Aug 86 p 1

[Text]

New Delhi, Aug. 17: The widely speculated differences between the President, Mr Zail Singh, and the government surfaced again on Friday when the Prime Minister's secretariat and Rashtrapati Bhavan tangled over certain passages contained in the President's Independence Day-eve address to the nation.

The Prime Minister's secretariat indicated that it would be prudent to delete at least two paragraphs from the draft of the Presidential address, which appeared to be critical of the government's handling of the law and order situation. The cri-

tical references were ultimately dropped and the wrangle delayed the recording of the broadcast by a few hours.

In the Presidential address that finally went on AIR, Mr Zail Singh pointed out that fruits of development have still not reached large sections of society. "We are yet to reach a reasonable degree of satisfaction in the provision of even the minimum needs of the poorest people," he said.

Rashtrapati Bhavan and the Prime Minister's secretariat had also reportedly disagreed on certain names in the honours list announced on Republic Day-eve.

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CSO: 4600/1086

INDIA

GANDHI PLANS TO REVIEW GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONING

Madras THE HINDU In English 10 Aug 86 p 12

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, Aug. 9.

After the current session of Parliament, the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, intends to take a critical look at the functioning of his Government as part of an in-depth review of its performance before he completes his second year in office.

As he will be roughly half-way through his five-year term when the country celebrates the 40th anniversary of its independence next year, he is reported to be very keen on giving a better account of his leadership in the one year left for this historic occasion.

Generating faith: The Government proposes to celebrate this event in a big way to galvanise the patriotic fervour of the people by inspiring greater confidence in the destiny of the nation. A hand-picked group of imaginative publicists and dedicated civil servants will be entrusted with this difficult task of generating greater faith in the capacity of the country's leadership to uphold its cherished values and improve the quality of life of its people.

A golden opportunity lost: The Prime Minister's advisers concede that he lost a golden opportunity last year to live up to the promises he made in his famous Congress centenary speech to cleanse the country's politics and purify its spirit. Any new attempts made to harness the emotions of the people with fresh assurances of firm action are not likely to evoke the right responses unless matching steps are taken to restore inner party democracy, curb corruption and weed out controversial personalities from pivotal positions.

Amidst his excessive preoccupations with foreign affairs, Mr. Gandhi has had no time really to identify the areas of failure in his Government, pinpoint the causes for the faltering performance of many of his colleagues, enforce better standards of accountability and take suitable steps to tone up the administration. The concentration of too much power in his hands has burdened him with so many responsibilities

that he is not always able to devote full attention to them.

Superficial assessments: Though he has gained considerable experience in the last 20 months and is able to take decisions without relying unduly on the advice of his confidants, the Prime Minister has not been able to probe deeper into the inadequacies of the present system of government. As a result the superficial assessments that are made from time to time of the performance of individual Ministers have tended to concentrate on their administrative limitations or personal infractions rather than on the inherent constraints in the decision-making and implementation processes that inhibit individual initiative leading to avoidable delays and inaction.

More drastic steps: The Prime Minister, according to some of those who are close to him, now realises that a periodic Cabinet reshuffle cannot by itself contribute to better government, that more drastic steps have to be taken to revitalise a badly run-down system. So the latest talk of an in-depth review of the functioning of the Government is not confined to the expectation of another instalment of Cabinet changes, since it is evidently aimed at a more drastic shake-up of the administration.

Testing time: In a democratic society with an elective government, a mid-way point in the tenure of a Prime Minister can be a testing time, since it can also be a turning point for the better or worse in the mood of the people. The voters who have given the mandate become rather restive over the inability of the leader to live up to their expectations.

The consequent disappointment can lead to disenchantment and even disillusionment, acting in turn as a damper on the public mood even on great national occasions. And it is to ensure that there is no such psychic downturn that the Prime Minister is anxious to take steps to refurbish the image of his Government before the 40th anniversary celebrations of the country's independence.

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CSO: 4600/1068

INDIA

GURKHA PROBLEMS BRING STRAIN BETWEEN CENTER, PUNJAB

Madras THE HINDU in English 19 Aug 86 p 1

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, Aug. 18.

Relations between the Centre and West Bengal are getting strained over the recent criticism of the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, that the marxist Government was not tackling the Gorkha National Liberation Front activists in Darjeeling district with the kind of firmness that is needed for curbing such agitations.

Some highly exaggerated reports have been circulating in Calcutta that the Centre was secretly planning to extend the proposed legislation under Article 249 to assume direct responsibility for putting down the GNLF agitation in this border district.

Centre's fears: Despite spirited assertions by the GNLF leaders that they are fighting only for a separate State within the Indian union, the Centre fears that an agitation of this sort in a sensitive border area could easily assume the dimensions of a separatist movement.

The Centre is aware that many Gorkha ex-servicemen who have retired from the Indian Army and settled in Darjeeling area are either taking part in this agitation or sympathising with the demand for a separate State. The concept of a Gorkhaland that is being propagated by the GNLF leaders is intended to bring together not only the Nepali settlers in Darjeeling

district and Sikkim, but also in eastern Bihar, Assam and Meghalaya where they have been domiciled for long working in tea plantations.

GNLF demands: The Bengal ruling Left Front Chairman, Mr. Saroj Mukherjee, and the Chief Minister, Mr. Jyoti Basu, have been discussing this problem with their colleagues to draw up a set of proposals that should meet all the legitimate demands of the GNLF short of supporting its demand for a separate State.

But the Centre is not satisfied with the attempts of the West Bengal Government to contain this agitation by conceding many of their demands under the threat of a wider inter-State agitation. It is being termed as an ill-disguised attempt to appease and placate these Gorkha militants for political reasons.

Vigilance intensified: The Centre has intensified its own vigilance in this highly strategic area bordering Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan, where an agitation of this kind could easily acquire secessionist overtones. It is for this reason that the Prime Minister has been urging the marxist Government to deal firmly with this movement before it gets out of hand and begins to acquire a violent character with the participation of many ex-servicemen in it.

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CSO: 4600/1090

INDIA

GANDHI INTERVIEW WITH ALGERIE

BK300934 Hong Kong AFP in English 0924 GMT 30 Aug 86

[Text] New Delhi, 30 August (AFP)--Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi has ruled out a military conflict with China to settle the Sino-Indian frontier dispute following recent mutual accusations of border incursions. The border dispute is an issue to be settled "across the table," Mr Gandhi said in an interview with the Algerian magazine ALGERIE ACTUALITE, the English language text of which was released to journalists here Saturday.

He said he did not foresee "military consequences" to the trading of accusations by Beijing and New Delhi, and hoped a negotiated settlement will emerge soon. "It really needs to be sorted out across the table, and it is time we sit down and do it," Mr Gandhi was quoted as saying.

China accused India last week of encroaching into Chinese territory and conducting an "expansionist policy." Earlier this month, the Indian Government claimed that Chinese troops had crossed into remote Arunachal Pradesh State in June and illegally collected taxes from Indian villagers.

The charges and counter-charges were seen by analysts as marking the start of a new period of strained relations between the two countries which fought a bitter border war in 1962.

Seven rounds of Sino-Indian border talks, the latest held last month, have made little headway towards resolving the dispute.

Mr Gandhi admitted that the talks have not been "as fruitful as we would have like them to be." But his talks with Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang at a meeting in New York last year had led to hopes that progress would be made, he said. "That was a very good meeting," Mr Gandhi said. "I was quite optimistic after that meeting. We hope we will be able to bring it back to that level of optimism."

China claims some 90,000 square kilometres (36,000 square miles) of land on the Indian side of the McMahon Line, which the British Colonial Government established as the official Sino-Indian frontier in 1914. India says it owns 38,000 square kilometres (14,600 square miles) of territory on the Chinese side. Beijing has not accepted the McMahon Line as the official frontier. Mr Gandhi said: "We feel that the line is at one point, China feels it is at another point. We have to sort it out."

Mr Gandhi, who left early Saturday for the Nonaligned summit conference beginning Monday in Zimbabwe, also answered questions on subjects expected to come up before the summit. He called for Nonaligned support for the six African Frontline States to help them resist South African retaliation when sanctions are imposed against Pretoria. "We must not be seen shirking our responsibilities in supporting the Frontline States," he was quoted as saying.

He also denied charges that the 102-member movement was pro-Soviet and anti-West. "I don't see the Nonaligned as being a movement that is anti-anyone.... We fight for principles," said Mr Gandhi, the outgoing chairman of the group. He added: "We fight for what we think is right and it is not really relevant who is opposing it. What is relevant is that we fight for principles."

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CSO: 4600/1088

INDIA

DEFENSE OFFICIALS CONCERNED OVER SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

Madras THE HINDU in English 17 Aug 86 p 12

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, Aug. 16.

A detailed review of India's national security environment, in terms of its external defence requirements and domestic disorders that expose the country increasingly to foreign interference, is being made at the highest level to assess the force levels, types of equipment, training procedures and financial outlays needed for coping with these threat perceptions.

The intention is to keep the overall size of the country's armed forces more or less frozen at the present levels, but concentrate on improving their mobility, fire-power, intelligence and communications with greater reliance on modern defence technologies and strategic concepts for better utilisation of its limited resources.

Strategic implications

It is not only the growing complexities of the country's defence responsibilities that receive attention during such reviews, but also the strategic implications of different kinds of political developments in the neighbourhood that impinge on India's external security and internal peace. The defence planners have to keep a close eye on the tensions generated by the inter-action of different kinds of turmoils in the area that often lead to a strange congruence of hostile influences affecting India's national interests.

The country has also to deal with the increasing danger of big power rivalries in the region in the wake of such unsettling developments that strain bilateral relations besides exposing these countries to all kinds of foreign interference. It has to contend with the growing tendency of its neighbours to turn even to smaller powers like Israel and South Africa that are only too eager to fish in these troubled waters to embarrass a country like India that is strongly opposed to their policies and actions.

The ethnic crisis in Sri Lanka, for example, has bred a paranoid mentality in this neighbouring country, making the Jayewardene government to nurse a grievance that India is at least partly responsible for its plight. The result is that it has been acquiring military equipment or seeking training facilities for its armed forces from countries as divergent as Israel and Pakistan.

There are reports that Sri Lankan soldiers are being trained at same camps in some cases as the Afghan insurgents and Sikh terrorists. The Government of India has this disquieting information in its possession of the absurd lengths to which the Zia regime is prepared to go to embarrass this country, while feigning friendship and pressing for a no-war pact.

The Government is no less concerned about the anti-Indian attitude that has been assiduously built up in Nepal by China over the years in the wake of the Sino-Indian border conflict. It has inevitably led to the upsurge of Gorkha sub-nationalism in an area of great strategic importance stretching from the border areas of Bihar and the Darjeeling district of West Bengal through Sikkim to Assam and Meghalaya in the North-East region.

The relationship with Bangladesh has also been soured by many unresolved problems that range from division of Ganga waters and exchange of enclaves to demarcation of the maritime boundary and erection of the controversial border fence by India to check illegal immigration. But fortunately it has been kept within manageable limits with very little foreign involvement except the persistent attempts of Pakistan to create difficulties by propagating its own brand of Islamic fundamentalism.

The Indian defence chiefs want the country's armed forces to be organised in such a manner that all border tensions created by strained bilateral relations that do not pose a major secu-

city threat should be dealt with by paramilitary forces, leaving the regular army free to concentrate primarily on the country's defence. They are not happy over the growing tendency to call the army to assist civil authority too frequently without realising the consequences of exposing troops to politically volatile situations even for the limited purpose of fighting terrorism.

The primary concern of the defence establishment is to improve the operational efficiency of the armed forces through better training and greater motivation without the distractions of domestic politics and regional agitations. As head of the government, and in his concurrent capacity as Defence Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi is reported to be fully in agreement with this view and extending his full cooperation in recasting the country's strategic concerns and security perceptions.

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CSO: 4600/1084

INDIA

SECOND GENERATION LAUNCH VEHICLE READY THIS YEAR

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 12 Aug 86 p 5

[Text]

Trivandrum, Aug 11 (UNI) — The 22.5-metre, 39-tonne augmented satellite launch vehicle (ASLV), India's second generation satellite launch vehicle, is fast getting ready for its first developmental flight from Sriharikota later this year.

A firm date for the launch is likely to be fixed in about a 45 days when the remaining tests and evaluation of the various sub-systems and components that go into the five-stage ASLV are completed, according to Dr S C Gupta, director of the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) here.

If everything goes according to schedule, the space authorities hope to have the launch well before the onset of inclement weather at Sriharikota in the middle of October. If this is not possible, the launch would be fixed for late December.

Dr Gupta said elaborate tests were being carried out on various inputs of the ASLV which incorporated a number of new and advanced technologies vital for India's future launch vehicles like the polar satellite launch vehicle (PSLV) and geostationary satellite launch vehicle (GSLV).

The ASLV, designed to put a 150-kg satellite in a low earth orbit of 400 km, will enhance India's launch vehicle capability more than three times from SLV-3.

With two strap-on motors having their own control and associated systems, the ASLV, is in effect a five-stage vehicle. Each of these strap-ons has a propulsive thrust similar to the first stage of the SLV-3. The strap-on 'zero stage' and the four stages of the core vehicle constitute the five stages of the

ASLV.

Mr M S R Dev, director of the ASLV project and head of mission control, said the new technologies being experimented for the first time in the ASLV included the closed loop guidance system with on-board computer, S-band range and range rate transponder (SRRT) to aid injection tracking of the ASLV, bulbous metallic heat shield with radio frequency transparency provision to accommodate large volume spacecraft, micro-processor checkout systems with distributed processing concepts and the strap-on motors with canted nozzles to augment booster capability.

The ASLV project also involved the designing, developing and commissioning of a mobile service structure, facilities for the vertical integration of the vehicle and setting up of earth stations at Trivandrum, Shar and Car Nicobar to track the satellite in orbit.

Mr Dev said the mobile service structure for vertical integration of the vehicle, the umbilical mast, the launch pedestal and a clear room facility for satellite preparation had already been commissioned at Shar. Also commissioned at Shar was the block house, which controls the launch, where a real-time computer system was now under evaluation.

He said except the strap-on zero stage and the fourth stage housing the vital equipment bay, and other stages and sub-assemblies of the vehicle had been transported to Shar for vertical integration.

Tracking stations at Trivandrum, Shar and Car Nicobar had also been set

up and simulation trials were being carried out.

A week ago, the concerned electronic package was taken aboard aircraft over Trivandrum and Shar stations to test the functioning of the tracking stations. A similar aircraft sortie would be made over Car Nicobar within two weeks.

The VSSC at present was doing a multitude of tests on the various inputs that go into the equipment bay and the closed loop guidance system. The tests would be completed in two or three weeks after which all the stages of the vehicle would be transported to the vertical integration building at Shar.

Mr Dev said the closed loop guidance system marked a significant qualitative improvement over the SLV-3, which used what was known as open loop guidance system.

In other words, a certain pre-determined trajectory or path was stored in an electronic memory inside the vehicle which was guided along this path. Any departure from this desired course was corrected instantly by the control systems located in the various stages of the SLV-3.

Closed loop guidance approach, on the contrary, involved on-the-spot calculations to determine the speed, direction and position of the rocket and decide what changes in the course should be effected to achieve the prescribed final orbit of the satellite.

This necessitated the use of a computer on board the vehicle. With this system, a specified orbit could be achieved with far more accuracy and predictability than with the open loop scheme.

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CSO: 4600/1087

INDIA

LOK SABHA PASSES BILL TO SET UP NATIONAL GUARD

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 21 Aug 86 p 4

[Text]

New Delhi, Aug. 20 (UNI): The Lok Sabha today passed by voice vote the National Security Guards Bill providing for a self contained statute for the new security force, raised in 1984, to combat terrorism and extremism. Earlier, the House rejected all the 44 amendments, also in voice voting.

Replying to the debate, the minister of state for home, Mr Ghulam Nabi Azad, who piloted the Bill, assured the House that the national security guards would be put to use only in situations demanding combating of terrorist activities.

The CPI leader, Mr Indrajit Gupta, had said that the force could be "misused" for other internal disturbances as well. Mr Azad also promised stringent punishment to anybody in the force overstepping his assigned tasks.

He pointed out that the authority to make recruitments to the force were not specially mentioned in the Bill as it was to be done under the provisions of the National Security Act.

Mr Azad said about 90 per cent of the NSG's strength will be made up of deputations from

the Army, BSF and CRPF. Only a minimal number would be taken in from the police.

He said the recruitment and composition of the forces were being kept "flexible" because of the changes likely to occur in terrorist situations.

No intelligence wing: The minister of state for home, Mr Arun Nehru, ruled out the creation of a separate intelligence wing to assist the NSG. He said it would be assisted by the Central and state intelligence bodies.

Mr Nehru said the government sought to create a totally new ethos and culture for the NSG and it would be oriented to carry out a task of a different concept and not normal policing activities. It would not be possible for the existing paramilitary forces like the BSF, CISF and the CRPF to suddenly switch over their role and function as a specialised force.

Several members, during the debate, had questioned the need for a separate force for curbing terrorist activities.

Mr Nehru said although the NSG was in a formative stage, having been raised in

1984, it has already assisted the Punjab police in combating activities. The intelligence agencies had also done a commendable job in Punjab as was evident by the many arrests made in the state recently.

Regarding training for the NSG, the minister said a separate camp was being held for the purpose. Even the state police forces were being called to undergo training in these camps. He said members of the consultative committee attached to his ministry could visit these camps to ascertain the training facilities available to the NSG.

Mr Nehru said there was a fully trained force for anti-hijacking operations. It had been provided sophisticated equipment and its task would be entirely different from that of the NSG. He, however, declined to divulge more details for security reasons.

Mr Nehru assured the House that the government would implement various welfare measures like housing, pension and proper pay structure for the NSG. It would be deployed like any other armed force within the constitutional framework.

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CSO: 4600/1095

INDIA

MINISTER NOTES 'UNFRIENDLY ACTS' BY PAKISTAN

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 13 Aug 86 p 9

[Text]

NEW DELHI, Aug. 12.—The existence of terrorist training camps in Pakistan and the assistance which terrorists receive from there to carry out their operations in India constitute "unfriendly acts" the Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr Eduardo Faleiro, said in the Rajya Sabha today.

Replying to a question from Mr Chitta Basu (FB) he said that the support to terrorists certainly hampered improvement of relations between the two countries observing that Pakistan denied the existence of such training camps or aiding terrorists, the Minister said. "Their deeds do not go with their words".

Pakistan's receiving large quantities of sophisticated weapons from the USA also clouded the atmosphere, and Mr Faleiro said that the U.S. Administration had been told of India's concern on that score. "We realize that the money we have to spend to keep pace with them could be better utilized for development".

The offer of a no-war pact by Pakistan did not make much sense since India feels that all disputes should be settled bilaterally. The proposal did not prohibit the es-

tablishment of military bases by foreign nations which India felt it should.

Mr Faleiro said that the Pakistan President had invited the Prime Minister to visit his country but thereafter some "negative elements" had cropped up.

However, India was keen on continuing the dialogue with Pakistan. Some progress had been made by the Joint Commission in this regard. There was no doubt the people of the two countries had firm cultural bonds and the Government of India was doing its best to strengthen the relations.

Specifically discussing the no-war pact, he said "differences persist on some important aspects." Mr Faleiro did not feel that a no-war pact was absolutely vital. The Simla Agreement covered most of the major issues.

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CSO: 4600/1079

INDIA

PAKISTAN ACTIONS BELIE CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 21 Aug 86 p 9

[Article by V.T. Joshi]

[Text] ISLAMABAD, August 20.

EVEN in the midst of the tragic and continuing disturbances that have marred Pakistan's independence day, both the President, Gen. Zia-ul-Haq, and the Prime Minister, Mr. M. K. Juneja, have not failed to send gracious, though customary, messages of goodwill and good wishes to the people of India on the occasion of India's independence day.

In his message to India's President, Mr. Zail Singh, Gen Zia said: "Establishment of tension-free goodneighbourly and co-operative relations with India remains one of the foremost objectives of the government and people of Pakistan. It is our earnest conviction that such a relationship and mutual confidence between India and Pakistan would make an outstanding contribution towards the realisation of our common objectives of regional co-operation."

SPATE OF IRRITANTS

ws2 Echoing these sentiments in his message to his Indian counterpart, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, Mr. Juneja said: "We in Pakistan remain firm in our resolve to establish goodneighbourly and co-operative relations with India. We are convinced this will serve the best interests of our two peoples and would be an important factor of peace and stability in our region."

But if these messages are not to remain mere customary exchanges of greetings they have to be followed up with matching deeds by both sides to remove the accumulated irritants that have soured Indo-Pak relations in the past few months.

The latest instance is a recent disconcerting interview at Lahore to Pakistan's largest circulated Urdu daily, "Jang", by a band of foreign-based Sikh extremists. Though by no stretch of imagination can it be connected to President Zia or Mr. Juneja or any other Pakistan government leader, the fact that Jathedar Satinder Pal Singh and his ilk of the so-called International Sikh Youth Federation usually get away with all the nonsense they have talked is quite disturbing.

Samples of what Satinder Singh says: "Rajiv Gandhi will soon be sent to the same place where his mother has gone ... Zail Singh will meet the same fate as Longowal ... assassination of general Vaidya was the duty of Sikhs ... people on the hit list will not be spared even after the creation of Khalistan..."

The interview by Satinder Singh and three others — Balbir Singh, Bhupinder Singh and Harchand Singh — goes on and on in the same vein.

Satinder Singh's outrageous statements remind one of Jagjit Singh Chauhan's provocative announcement over the BBC some two years ago of a handsome reward for the assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, which led to a sharp controversy between India and Britain.

It is surprising that a handful of foreign-based self styled Sikh extremists enjoy the hospitality of the Pakistani media and abuse it without let or hindrance to say unsavoury things at the expense of India. Their statements and doings not only go unchallenged but also appear to be countenanced with a degree of equanimity when the two countries are

supposed to be engaged in an earnest exercise to normalise their relations. Even more regrettable is an editorial in the prestigious Muslim daily, comparing the assassination of General Vaidya with that of Gen. O'Dwyer in England by Udham Singh 20 years after the Jalianwala massacre. Udham Singh did not run away after shooting O'Dwyer, unlike General Vaidya's killers. It is plain lack of historical appreciation of the two different situation, if not exactly historical distortion.

The "Muslim" editorial warns that the "Hindu view of the Sikh problem as an ugly Sikh joke carries dangerous portends for Pakistan." Though it does not accept the Indian charge of Pakistani involvement in the Sikh problem, the paper legitimately calls upon the Pakistani government to evolve a "coherent India policy" instead of merely offering "passive" denials. "Like it or not, Pakistan will be implicated in India's Sikh problem," the daily warns.

This contrasts with the repeated assertions of the Indian government that it has furnished its Pakistani counterpart with detailed and positive evidence of terrorist support and sustenance from across the border. Some Indian papers have even named the places, agencies and officers in Pakistan allegedly involved in the Punjab problem.

The Pakistani government has equally often denied these allegations and dismissed the reports as stories based on confessions "extorted" from captured Sikhs.

In talks with this correspondent, some responsible officials in the foreign office do not rule out the possibility of some illegal and criminal activities by smugglers and other anti-social elements on the border, but argue that this could have only a marginal effect on the situation. They point out that the Sikh problem is essentially India's internal problem and that Pakistan is anxious not to interfere in any way.

This inevitably raises the question: Should non-interference also mean indifference to anti-India activities on Pakistani soil?

While the arguments and counter-arguments continue, Indian sources

here wonder how callow Sikh youths in their teens become good marksmen, secure arms and manage to cause havoc without some kind of training and encouragement from somewhere.

According to independent observers, a possible solution to the impasse lies in joint efforts by the two sides to stem the terrorist tide. But Pakistani proclivity to give support to foreign-based Sikh extremists, unwittingly or otherwise, is incongruous with its professions and holds little possibility of joint efforts.

It is indeed enigmatic how six other Canadian Sikhs who assaulted Indian diplomats twice in seven months — last November and again in June — are getting kid-glove treatment. They enjoy ungrudging hospitality in Pakistan even while supposedly facing prosecution. Their names and antecedents are said to have been given to the Pak authorities by the Indian embassy here as far back as in January, but little has been done to bring them to book speedily.

In fact, this same group of Sikhs stated in a recent interview to a Canadian newspaper that they were very happy in Pakistan and the police and other functionaries "treat us like brothers." The Pakistani government cannot be unaware of such audacious even if embarrassing and revealing claims. It can hardly plead helplessness in dealing with them.

Juxtapose Satinder Singh's utterances with another curious episode. An obscure Lahore monthly received a show-cause notice and was asked to explain why it should not be made to deposit a security of Rs. 15,000 under the provisions of the press and publications ordinance because of certain articles which were "likely to prejudice friendly relations between Pakistan and the United States."

Pakistan's anxiety to protect and promote its relations with the U.S. is understandable. But the question that arises is whether it considers relations with India less important.

Incidentally, ever since the revocation of martial law, Pakistani journalists have been clamouring for the withdrawal of the draconian press and publications ordinance.

INDIA

TRIBALS PLAN MOVEMENT FOR JHARKHAND STATE

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 11 Aug 86 p 4

[Text]

Ranchi, Aug. 10 (UNI): The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, a militant organisation of the tribals in Bihar, has decided to launch a sustained movement for the creation of a separate Jharkhand state and for the emancipation of tribals from their age-old exploitation.

"We may be compelled to settle our scores on the streets if the government does not yield to our long-pending demand for a separate state," Mr Shibu Soren, MLA and general secretary of the morcha, told newsmen here today.

Mr Soren said they would observe Independence Day as a "protest day" and the next three

months would be used for an intensive opinion mobilisation campaign among the tribals. The struggle would be launched from November 15, the birthday of the tribal leader, Birsa Munda.

The deputy leader of the JMM group in the state Assembly, Mr Suraj Mandal, who was also present at the press briefing, said the entire tribal community would boycott all government functions on Independence Day and wear black badges.

Mr Mandal said on October 2—Gandhiji's birthday—the morcha would organise a 12-hour dharna at the district headquarters in the Chhotanagpur and Santhal Parganas region.

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CSO: 4600/1072

INDIA

SOVIET VISITOR: IMPERIALISTS PLOT AGAINST INDIA

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 20 Aug 86 p 9

[Text]

MADRAS, August 19.
(PTI).

THE Soviet vice-president, Mr. S. B. Tattiev, today charged 'imperialist countries' with hatching plots against some Indian leaders, and creating problems in Punjab and in Sri Lanka.

He told reporters here that the imperialists had resorted to 'intrigues and plots' to 'destabilise the region, and called for pooling of efforts to fight such a policy.

Condemning the genocide in Sri Lanka, Mr. Tattiev said the interference by 'imperialists' in that country was aimed at obstructing India's efforts to find a political solution to the ethnic problem there.

The present situation in Punjab was caused by interference by these forces, he added.

Mr. Tattiev said the 'imperialists' had used well-known methods in Sri Lanka and in Punjab to create problems, though the problems were quite different.

PEACE ZONES

The Soviet Union stood for treating the Indian and Pacific oceans as peace

zones for the security and development of the people in these regions, he said.

Mr. Tattiev said there was no change in the Indian foreign policy and her relationship with his country after the change of government, and added that the Indian prime minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, had pursued the policies adopted by his mother.

The Western mass media, with a view to creating problems in Indo-

Soviet relationship, was trying to 'distort facts and indulge in wild speculation' to claim that there was a shift in India's foreign policy, he said.

Mr. Tattiev said Indo-Soviet relations had strengthened, and were constantly developing, with Mr. Gandhi making a significant contribution in this regard.

The Soviets valued highly Mr. Gandhi's role in promoting peace in the world and in the fight against nuclear weapons, he said.

The people of the Soviet Union were also glad that India had made rapid strides in all spheres, and fully supported strengthening of co-operation between the two countries, he added.

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CSO: 4600/1093

INDIA

PRESS BRIEFED ON ARMORED CORPS TRAINING PROGRAM

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 19 Aug 86 p 5

[Text]

AHMEDNAGAR, August 18.

THE armoured corps here is now evolving a training programme in military technology on a variety of subjects including electronic warfare and chemical and space warfare to be imparted to all defence officers.

The project, initially proposed in 1983 by the current chief of army staff, General K. Sunderji, is now being taken up actively and the first batch of officers will join the course by the year-end.

Briefing a press team recently, the commandant of the regiment, Lt-Gen. G. S. Kler, AVSM, said the Indian army now possessed laser weapons, remotely piloted vehicles, and thermal imaging and computer network systems. The fast pace of induction of high-technology equipment had necessitated such a training for officers in the army, he said.

The armoured corps centre and school here was evolving training courses for instructors and over 100 of them would later impart the course to officers at the various military centres in the country, Lt-Gen. Kler said.

VEHICLE TECHNOLOGY

Technology training will be dealt with under the heads of armament and military vehicle technology, electronic, chemical and biological warfare, space technology, and systems analysis and

operations research.

The national press team was shown around the centre and the training programmes in gunnery, driving and communications.

The centre has acquired modern simulators in tank driving which create the exact conditions of the live track, including complex terrains, reduced visibility and the rolling and pitching.

One of them, the T-55 tank simulator, was installed just three months ago and imparts training using films, and a shadow projector.

GOOD RETURNS

Apart from saving on the fuel and the life of tank components, simulating machines also offer a good return on time spent on them. A 45-minute exercise on a simulator is equivalent to over 20 km. of actual tank driving. Over 7,000 soldiers have so far been trained on these machines. The tanks themselves have been equipped with the latest in armament. When questioned about the lack of an auto-loading system in some of our tanks, Lt. Gen. Kler said they had recently given a demonstration in firing to a visiting foreign general, who was "amazed at a human loader firing 26 rounds in one minute, and with 100 per cent accuracy".

He reportedly said that with such efficiency, the Indian army probably did not need the advanced computer-aided systems now in use with them.

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CSO: 4600/1089

INDIA

MNF COALITION MINISTRY INSTALLED IN MIZORAM

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 22 Aug 86 p 9

[Text]

AIZAWL, August 21 (PTI):

ANINE-MEMBER Congress-MNF coalition ministry headed by the MNF president, Mr. Laldenga, with the outgoing chief minister, Mr. Lalthanhawla, as his deputy was sworn in here today.

The Lt. governor, Mr. H. S. Dubey, administered the oath of office and secrecy to the ministers at Raj Bhavan.

The ministers, all of cabinet rank, included four from the MNF and five from the Congress.

Besides Mr. Laldenga, the other ministers from the MNF were the party vice-president, Mr. Zoramthanga, the treasurer, Mr. Raulchhina and Mr. Tawnluia, the former chief of the Mizo National Army.

From the Congress side, four cabinet ministers of the Lalthanhawla government were included in the new team.

They were Mr. Sainghaka (former finance minister), Mr. C. L. Ruala (former agriculture minister), Mr. Rhthangipana (former supply and transport minister) and Mr. Vaivenga (former minister for revenue).

The three ministers of Mr. Lalthanhawla's government who did not find any place in the new coalition ministry were Mr. Rokamlowa (cabinet minister of education), Mr. Hitmei and Mr. Liansuama (both ministers of state).

Senior civil and military officials and most of the political leaders, including those of the MNF, were present at the swearing-in.

Earlier in an informal talk with newsmen, Mr. Laldenga said that the first task of the coalition government would be to strive for a social reconstruction aimed at an all-round social and economic development of the backward hill region "by checking corruption and the tendency to turn violent."

Mr. Laldenga said to rejuvenate the agriculture, the government would try its best to put a stop to the system of "jhum" cultivation (shifting) by encouraging villagers to take up permanent cultivation.

He said not only MNF returnees but also 90 per cent of the people of Mizoram would need to be resettled.

He was referring to the formation of "group villages", where a cluster of villages was put together as a part of the counter-insurgency programme during the late sixties.

He felt some of the MNF personnel could be absorbed in the police and para-military forces and encouraged to take to other vocations like agriculture, sericulture and horticulture.

M.N.F.'s BLACK TIES: Some of the MNF men came to attend the swearing-in ceremony wearing the MNF and Mizo National Army (MNA) black tie with the insignia of a tiger-head.

A senior government official said this was done despite clear instructions by the government not to use the MNA uniform and insignia.

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CSO: 4600/1096

INDIA

TRIPURA FRONT PANEL FAILS TO ENDORSE MIZORAM ACCORD

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 12 Aug 86 p 9

[Text]

AGARTALA, Aug. 11.—The resolution welcoming the Mizoram peace accord, which was earlier passed by the State Cabinet at its meeting here, could not be endorsed by the Left Front Committee, the policy-making body of the Government, following differences of opinion among the Front partners.

The resolution, passed by the Cabinet at the meeting on July 24 under the presidency of the Deputy Chief Minister, Mr Dasarath Dev, welcomed the peace accord and hope that the two-decade-long MNF violence "will definitely come to an end if the accord is implemented properly" and would have a far-reaching impact on the "waning problem of extremism in Tripura".

The Cabinet, however, described Mr Laldenga's demand for a greater Mizoram as "most unfortunate" and noted its "satisfaction" over Mr Rajiv Gandhi saying "no" to it. The RSP leaders at a meeting here on August 8 were believed to have refused to endorse the "unqualified appreciation" for the accord by the Ministry since they felt that the Centre's settlement with the former self-exiled leader of the MNF, by destabilizing a legally-established Government of Mr Lal Thanhawla, had implications.

The Front Committee meeting was earlier summoned mainly to

approve the Cabinet resolution and review the State Government's stand regarding the demand for a regional council for the Mizos of the Jampui hill of North Tripura along the border of Mizoram. The Forward Bloc leaders, who reacted against the Cabinet resolution, were reluctant to endorse it. As the CPI has supported the accord in toto, its State leaders are annoyed with a number of "ifs and buts" in the Cabinet resolution.

A spokesman of the State RSP unit alleged that the CPI(M) had changed its earlier stand regarding the accord. The CPI(M)'s Central Committee report as published in the "People's Democracy" made it clear that "Mr Laldenga had installed himself virtually as a representative of the Government in exile in Britain and his connexions there were well-known. He and his organizations were supporting the TNV and other insurgent groups in the region with the help of the Bangladesh Government.

/13046

CSO: 4600/1074

INDIA

PAPERS REPORT DEVELOPMENTS IN MIZORAM

MNF Ban Lifted

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 19 Aug 86 p 9

[Text]

NEW DELHI, August 18 (PTI).

THE government tonight lifted the ban on Mizo National Front (MNF) and other allied organisations in Mizoram with immediate effect, thus paving the way for the takeover of reins of administration of the Union territory by the MNF leader, Mr. Laldenga on August 21.

The MNF and other allied organisations were banned under the Unlawful Preventive Act, 1967.

The home ministry announcement said the notification declaring these organisations unlawful on January 13, 1986, also stood cancelled.

The announcement said the ban had been lifted following a communication received from the MNF chief, Mr. Laldenga that in accordance with the provisions of memoranda of settlement reached with the Centre, the MNF had discarded the organisation's so-called constitution and also abrogated and set aside the declaration of independence which it had made on March 1, 1966.

Mr. Laldenga would be heading as MNF-Congress coalition government till fresh elections are held after the Union territory attains statehood.

Mr. Laldenga said that his party had amended its constitution and the provision that it wanted "highest freedom" which was objectionable had been omitted in view of the settlement the MNF reached with the government.

He said his party constitution had advocated Christianity which had also been scrapped as it was against the secular spirit of the constitution.

DEPUTY CM

He said that the outgoing Congress chief minister, Mr. Lalthanhawala, would be the deputy chief minister of his nine-member coalition ministry.

Mr. Laldenga said the MNF, besides the chief ministership, would have three ministers, while the Congress would have five ministers, including the deputy chief minister.

Mr. Laldenga said that the question of MNF's demand for "Greater Mizoram" needs a lot of consideration and the matter would come up before the MNF convention on August 26.

Mr. Laldenga said his government would hold elections as early as possible as the present government is not going to be a "democratically-elected" government. It is going to be only a transitional government. I expect the elections as early as next year," he added.

The MNF leader said he had useful discussions with the home minister, Mr. Buta Singh, and Mr. Arjun Singh, Congress vice-president. But is too premature to say anything about the future course of action in Mizoram, he said.

He said over 600 MNF insurgents had come over ground and deposited their arms. "There is not a single person in the jungle. Even the so-called training camps in Burma have been closed down."

MNF Members' Cases Withdrawn

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 18 Aug 86 p 4

[Text]

Aizawl, Aug. 17 (UNI): The Centre has directed the Mizoram government to withdraw all cases against Mizo National Front members and remit the terms of those convicted under different charges, according to official sources.

About 280 MNF activists were convicted in about 230 cases on various charges since 1974.

The sources said four persons, including "Major" Biakchungu, were sentenced to life imprisonment for killing the Mizoram inspector-general of police, deputy inspector general of police and superintendent of police here on January 3, 1975. Another activist was given two years of rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 1,000 on November 11, 1976.

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CSO: 4600/1089

INDIA

ACCORD SIGNED WITH FRANCE ON GAS PIPELINE PROJECT

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 11 Aug 86 p 6

[Article by Latika Padgaonkar]

[Text]

Paris, Aug. 10: A credit agreement for a value of 1,200 million francs (Rs 226.41 crores), was signed in Paris on July 31, 1986, representing the financing of the French portion of the \$575-million Hazira-Bijapur-Jagdishpur (HBJ) gas pipeline project to be undertaken in India.

The agreement was signed at the Indian embassy in Paris by the Indian ambassador, and the president of Banque Francaise du Commerce Extérieur (BFCE) and the director general of Credit National. The HBJ contract signed in New Delhi on May 10, 1986 represents one of the biggest gas pipeline projects in the world, involving the laying of 1600 km of pipes connecting the Hazira gas fields in Gujarat to six large gas-based fertiliser plants in central and north India.

The contract was awarded by the Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL), after more than two years of negotiation and against stiff competition, to a Franco-Japanese consortium comprising Spie Capag (a member of the Spie Batignolles Group of France and Nippon Kokkan and Toyo Engineering of Japan. Major Indian contractors and sub-contractors involved in the project include Dodsals, Electronic Corporation of India Limited, Telecom-

munication Consultants of India Limited and Indian Telephone Industries.

The loan agreement breaks new ground in the field of soft credits, since this is the first time that a single mono-bloc loan has been extended in lieu of the mixed treasury and commercial credits traditionally used by the French for export financing.

The loan is of a long duration involving a repayment period of 28 years including a three-and-a-half-year grace period. The interest rate is below market rates and the advantage of the mono-bloc is that it is easier to manage with a single repayment schedule and to analyse according to the NPV system used in India, with an actuarial cost similar to the mixed credit formula.

The loan is being extended, on behalf of the French government by two public entities—the Banque Francaise du Commerce Extérieur (BFCE) and the Credit National. Financing has been arranged on behalf of the consortium by Banque Indo-Suez on several aspects of the contract, such as negotiation between the authorities and payment to the supplier on behalf of the Gas Authority of India Limited.

As a leader of the syndicate which includes the Paris branch of the State Bank of India, Banque Indo-Suez will also guarantee BFCE a sizeable part of its share in the total loan.

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CSO: 4600/1072

INDIA

ONGC CANCELS TENDERS FOR OFFSHORE DRILLING

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 13 Aug 86 p 1

[Article by G.K. Pandey]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, August 12

THE much publicised scheme of promoting Indian private sector in the field of oil exploration has received a harsh blow at the hands of the ONGC.

Inquiries here have revealed that the ONGC has now cancelled the tender floated in 1984 inviting Indian parties to undertake drilling in some of the onshore areas.

A recent communication to the bidders tersely states that the tender in question has been scrapped. It adds: "Our finance department is in the process of refunding the tender fee which you may get very soon."

The decision to cancel the tender has come as a rude shock to a number of Indian companies, including leading groups like the Tatas, Modis and Hindujas. It is not known what is in store now for the Indian entrepreneurs.

The ONGC has only recently invited fresh bids for 11 land drilling rigs for the north-eastern region, Rajasthan and the Krishna-Godawari-Cauvery area. The foreign parties can apply directly without involving the Indian parties.

The government, it may be recalled, took the decision to involve private

contractors for the onshore drilling programme on a selective basis as early as 1984. Based on this decision, the ONGC issued in February an advertisement under the caption: "Advance notice to Indian entrepreneurs for their participation in drilling activities at the ONGC."

The area initially considered was for deep drilling on land by four rigs of up to 6,000 metres depth. The advertisement notice stated at the end that it was intended for initiating advance action so that Indian entrepreneurs may be able to submit their offers soon after the release of notice inviting tenders, which will appear within a month's time.

Unfortunately, no decision could be taken after inviting bids repeatedly and after holding a series of discussions with bidders. In fact, the bidders were made to run from pillar to post to comply with the additional information and queries by the ONGC. What is really baffling everyone is that the ONGC, after reducing the number of rigs required from four to two, has finally decided to cancel the tender.

The scheme has had a chequered history of repeated postponements, several extensions after receipt of tender bids and fresh invitations for bids.

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CSO: 4600/1075

INDIA

DELAYED MONSOON THREATENS NORTHWESTERN GRAIN CROP

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 17 Aug 86 p 3

[Text]

NEW DELHI, August 16:

THE delayed onset of the monsoon and below normal precipitation in the early part of the season had adversely affected kharif crop prospects in the country's north-western grain bowl.

The situation has been aggravated by the frequent imposition of curfew in the fertile border belt of Punjab where the standing crop is reported to be in a bad shape due to the farmers' inability to irrigate their fields.

Reports reaching Krishi Bhavan from states indicate that paddy crop in some parts of Haryana, Punjab and Western UP has suffered heavy damage due to inadequacy of rains.

Large tracts of Rajasthan, Haryana and UP, surrounding the Union territory of Delhi, had experienced almost a drought till the revival last week of the monsoon in this region.

FIELDS UNSOWN

Paddy transplanting was hampered in this area due to the paucity of

moisture in the soil. There are also reports of transplanted seedlings having withered away. Besides, some fields are reported to have been left unsown.

The crop situation in many parts of Punjab, especially in the border belt, is said to be far from satisfactory. Though the disturbed state had not affected the influx of migratory labour and the availability of farm inputs, the frequent clamping of curfew and the almost persistent night curfew had impeded farming operations.

In most rural areas in Punjab, power is supplied only during the night. But the farmers have not been able to use it for operating tubewells because of movement restrictions.

The use of canal water for irrigation had also been limited in these areas as many farmers whose turn came at night could not avail of this facility.

However, the current rainy spell in this region is deemed beneficial for the standing crop. It may also facilitate belated paddy transplanting in some areas, retrieving the situation to some extent, it is believed.

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CSO: 4600/1083

IRAN

ACTING ENERGY MINISTER, ITALIAN OFFICIAL DISCUSS TIES

LD302046 Tehran IRNA in English 1856 GMT 30 Aug 86

[Text] Tehran, Aug 30 IRNA--A ceremony marking Italy's national day was held at Tehran's 12th international fair, Saturday.

Speaking at the ceremony, an official responsible for Italy's foreign trade institute said that his country has unbreakable relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Italy has carried out significant activities including construction of Bandar-e 'Abbas jetty as well as Mobarakeh steel plant.

The Italian official noted that Irano-Italy trade exchanges exceeded drls. 2.1 b. in 1985. He added that Iran's oil export played a key role in the two countries exchanges.

The two countries have once again decided to activate the joint economic commission, he pointed out.

In response, acting Energy Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran B. Kolah-Duz said that Tehran-Rome relations have always been based on understanding and good-will especially after the victory of the 1979 [words indistinct]

On cooperation between the two countries, the Iranian official said that Italy is partner in a number of Iranian industrial projects, among them Esfahan's Mobarakeh steel plant considered one of Iran's biggest national projects. He added that Italian companies have also collaborated in building the Bandar-'Abbas jetty.

Other joint cooperation included construction on Laar's Dam, Kangan gas refinery as well as establishment of power stations of Bandar-e Abbas and Esfahan.

The Italian official told IRNA that Irano-Italy trade exchanges exceeded 2,099 million dollars in 1985 which shows a decrease of 19.9 percent compared to 1984.

The Italian official said that his country has imported 554 million liras of goods, mostly oil, from Iran over the first six months of 1986.

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CSO: 4600/511

IRAN

MOSCOW TALKS SEEN BY OFFICIAL AS PROMISING

London MEED/THE MIDDLE EAST'S BUSINESS WEEKLY in English 16-22 Aug 86 p 10

[Text]

There are no obstacles to closer ties with the Soviet Union, including the supply of Iranian natural gas, according to a senior official who recently had talks in Moscow. Deputy minister for economic and international affairs Mohammad Javad Larijani described the talks as "very precise, frank and detailed;" both sides agreed they had an interest in building a solid, long-term relationship.

Foreign Affairs Minister Ali Akbar Velayati may visit Moscow later this year, and a joint economic commission will meet before the end of 1986, Larijani said.

Iran wants to revive plans to sell gas to the Soviet Union, and to use trans-Soviet pipelines to export gas to West Europe. "Talks on this subject continue between the two countries, and they have bright prospects," Larijani added.

Iran, which has the world's largest proven gas reserves after the Soviet Union, stopped supplies to the southern Soviet Union through the IGAT-1 pipeline in 1980, because of a price dispute. Another pipeline, IGAT-2, designed to export Iranian gas to West Europe in a three-way arrangement between Tehran, Moscow and European customers, was cancelled; only the southern section from the Gulf fields to Isfahan was completed. Larijani's statement implies Iranian willingness to complete IGAT-2.

Larijani did not say whether there had been any progress on Iran's demand for Soviet technicians to return to the site of incomplete power generation and industrial schemes. The technicians left in 1985, following Iraqi air raids on civilian areas.

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CS01 4600/522

IRAN

RESTORATION OF ECONOMIC LINKS WITH MOSCOW DISCUSSED

London MEED/THE MIDDLE EAST'S BUSINESS WEEKLY in English 30 Aug-5 Sep 86 p 13

[Article by Vahe Petrossian]

[Text]

OIL Minister Gholamreza Aqazadeh has achieved an economic — and possibly political — breakthrough in Iran's relations with the Soviet Union. The two countries may jointly explore the Caspian Sea for oil, and Iran may resume gas supplies to its northern neighbour that were interrupted by the 1979 revolution, it was announced after a visit to Moscow by the minister.

Aqazadeh has also persuaded the Soviet Union to cut oil production — by a promised 100,000 barrels a day (b/d) — in support of OPEC's price policy (see Regional Focus). Aqazadeh next goes to China and Latin America, in an effort to recruit further allies for OPEC.

The resumption of Iranian gas supplies would revive an arrangement made by the late Shah's government in the 1970s. Supplies through the IGAT-1 pipeline were disrupted in 1979 and halted the following year because of a price dispute. No details of the new gas price, or other aspects of the in-principle agreement reached by Aqazadeh, have been disclosed officially. However, the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) predicts that exports will start in December, at the rate of 3 million cubic metres a day, rising to 80 million-90 million cubic metres a day by March 1990.

Iranian gas production in 1983/84 reached nearly 30,000 million cubic metres, of which just above one-half was consumed domestically and the rest flared off. With throughput capacity of 10,000 million cubic metres a year, IGAT-1 could easily handle the initial supplies predicted by IRNA; the figures mentioned for 1990 suggest that there are plans to expand the 28,000 million-cubic-metre-a-year IGAT-2 line, which runs from the Gulf to Isfahan.

The Tehran daily Kayhan says a Soviet reply to the Iranian proposals is expected within three months. One area of Soviet concern is reliability; Moscow apparently wants an agreement that would prevent any recurrence of the kind of disruption which followed the 1979 revolution. At that time, the Soviet Union had to re-convert industries in Armenia and nearby regions to burn oil. According to IRNA, Soviet officials are now "seeking a long-term agreement . . . with strict provisions for both sides to observe implementation of the pact under any circumstances."

An Iranian oil team will visit Moscow in September to discuss Soviet assistance in exploiting the oil and gas-rich southern sector of the Caspian Sea. The Soviet Union has been extracting 200,000 barrels a day (b/d) of oil and a substantial volume of gas from the northern and central sectors. The Iranian sector, as well as the north of the country, have long been known to be rich in oil and gas reserves, but disputes about cancelled concessions granted to the Soviet Union earlier this century and later fears of Soviet interference have prevented exploitation of these resources. Any joint exploration in the Caspian would represent a breakthrough in political relations between the two countries.

IRNA says no firm decision has yet been made about the type of Soviet assistance — this could comprise the purchase or lease of equipment, or co-operation by contract. The Iranian team visiting Moscow will work out details of Aqazadeh's in-principle agreement.

There has been no word about Iran's demand for Soviet technicians to return to project sites abandoned in 1985, after Iraqi bombing raids on civilian areas. However, the

preliminary agreements on oil and gas represent a potentially important turning point in relations between the two countries.

Coming on top of Aqazadeh's earlier success in persuading OPEC to accept Iran's proposal for an oil production cutback, these successes have also enhanced the oil minister's standing within the country. He appears to have taken on some of the functions of a foreign affairs minister, and is already viewed by some as a possible prime ministerial candidate when Hossain Moussavi leaves office.

Aqazadeh's efforts to improve ties with the Soviet Union stem as much from political and military considerations as economic needs. Revenues from gas exports to the Soviet Union will be limited in the short term, and are unlikely to exceed \$500 million-1,000 million a year — even in the 1990s.

Iran is more concerned to weaken Moscow's ties with Baghdad — and, perhaps, to

convince the Soviet Union to reduce its weapons supplies to Iraq. Iranian officials have recently been making a concerted effort to enhance ties with Moscow by emphasising economic co-operation and playing down political differences (MEED 23:8:86). Observers believe Iran's offer of gas supplies is part of its regional political and military strategy.

Iran's rapprochement with the Soviet Union may be causing concern in Baghdad. Perhaps coincidentally, the Iraqi air force has recently added the Soviet-built Ramin power station at Ahwaz to its list of targets in Iran. In late August, Soviet deputy foreign affairs minister Vladimir Petrovsky visited Baghdad for talks with President Saddam Hussain and to offer reassurance to the Baathist regime. Baghdad television reported that Petrovsky conveyed a verbal message from Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and reiterated Soviet support for Iraq's efforts to end the Gulf war.

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CSO: 4600/508

IRAN

REGIME 'WILL NOT BORROW' DESPITE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

London MEED/THE MIDDLE EAST'S BUSINESS WEEKLY in English 30 Aug-5 Sep 86 p 12

[Text]

The government wants to expand economic and commercial links with the rest of the world, but intends to maintain economic independence. It will not borrow from western banks, says Prime Minister Hossain Moussavi. Addressing business people and diplomats from 35 countries at the 26 August opening of the Tehran international trade fair, he said: "While trying to fulfill all our financial and economic commitments, we try not to fall into the abyss of dependence and resist with all our power any measure which might revive colonialist and neo-colonialist relations in this country," he said.

Speaking on the same occasion, Commerce Minister Hassan Abedi Jaafari claimed Iran's commercial sector has become "more dynamic" under the pressure of reduced oil revenues. Non-oil exports in the first quarter of the Iranian year started 21 March were 81 per cent greater than in the corresponding period of 1985, at an all-time high of \$225 million, he said.

Moussavi said Iran had proved wrong western analysts who forecast that it would have to borrow from western banks

because of the combined pressures of the Gulf war and depressed oil revenues. Senior officials claim that, in any case, the recent Iraqi air attack on the Sirri island oil export terminal has not significantly affected export levels.

Estimates of Iran's oil exports since the early-August Sirri attack are contradictory. They range from 600,000 barrels a day (b/d) to a near-normal 1.4 million b/d. It is not even clear whether oil is being loaded at Sirri. The bulk of operations may have been transferred to facilities off Larak island, in the Strait of Hormuz, and Hengam island, just inside the Gulf.

Weather in the Larak area is said to have improved earlier than expected, allowing international tankers to berth alongside mother ships used as floating terminals.

In a separate development, a senior Oil Ministry official is quoted as saying that local contractors are completing the Moharram export pipeline from the Gurreh pumping station to a terminal east of Kharg island. International tenders for the 380-kilometre line were called off in June amid speculation that the Oil Ministry had cancelled the scheme (MEED 6:6:86).

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CSO: 4600/507

IRAN

INTENSIFICATION OF AIR WAR WITH IRAQ

London MEED/THE MIDDLE EAST'S BUSINESS WEEKLY in English 16-22 Aug 86 p 12

[Article by Vahe Petrossian]

[Text] IRAN and Iraq have stepped up the air war, in an apparent attempt to knock out each other's oil installations. On 12 August, hours after an Iranian missile fell on Baghdad, Iraqi aircraft carried out a surprise raid on Iran's oil export facilities at Sirri island. The following day, Iranian aircraft bombed an oil field near Kirkuk.

The attacks pushed up oil prices on the nervous international market by about \$0.65 a barrel, confirming the upward trend created by the recent OPEC decision to restrict output. Prices later fell back, giving a net \$0.25-a-barrel increase. Tanker insurance rates for Sirri have been doubled by leading London insurers; higher rates for the rest of the Gulf may be announced.

The Sirri raid was the most spectacular by Iraq for some time. Between two and six French-built Mirage F1 aircraft took part in the low-level attack, which damaged three supertankers, and sent a fleet of Iranian and international tankers heading for cover in UAE ports and waters further east.

Installations on Sirri may also have been hit, although damage appears to be minimal. At least three tankers chartered by Norwegian and Swiss oil traders were heading for the island on 13 August to pick up crude. Shipping specialists in the Gulf said Iran had quickly repaired damage to fixed installations and was clearing debris from the water. Damaged tankers were being towed away.

Two vessels were still on fire more than 24 hours after the attack. They included the Iranian-owned 233,788-dwt Azarpad,

which was towed on to a sandbank to prevent it sinking. Other damaged tankers are the 392,985-dwt Klelia and the 75,680-dwt Venture. At least 16 crew, most from the Azarpad — whose back appeared to have been broken by several explosions — were killed.

Insurance hike

Sirri's export facilities consist of a 100,000-barrel-a-day (b/d) fixed terminal and several floating terminals using tankers moored offshore. The tankers and fixed terminal are supplied by a shuttle service from the main Kharg island terminal, which lies further northwest in the war zone.

Sirri became the main port of call for international tankers in 1985, following more effective Iraqi missile attacks on tankers near Kharg. Insurance rates for Kharg increased to about 20 per cent of insured value for a single voyage; at Sirri, they were 0.25 per cent for a seven-day voyage, before doubling on 13 August.

Iran recently opened another export terminal off Larak island, just south of Bandar Abbas, in the Strait of Hormuz. However, bad weather in the strait has forced a switch back to Sirri. The storms in the Larak area may not abate until September, forcing Iran to continue relying on Sirri.

Iran's Oil Ministry has said an export terminal is being completed off Jask, in the Gulf of Oman. But it is not clear when this will be ready.

By hitting Sirri for the first time in the war, the Iraqi air force has demonstrated its

ability to strike deep behind Iranian lines. The Mirages, which were recently delivered by France, are thought to have been fitted with extra fuel tanks, or to have been refuelled in mid-air. Larak island, less than 200 kilometres east of Sirri, may also be within striking distance — although Larak falls under a defence umbrella of air and naval forces based at Bandar Abbas.

Psychological blow

The attack's practical effects on Iran's vital oil exports and revenues may thus be marginal. But Baghdad has scored an important point in the psychological war between the two nations.

Both countries have increased attacks on industrial and economic targets in recent weeks — with each accusing the other of hitting civilian targets as well. The retaliatory strikes culminated with the 12 August attack against Baghdad by an Iranian surface-to-surface missile. Iran says the missile struck an oil refinery near the Iraqi capital; reports from Baghdad speak only of a big explosion in the early hours of the morning — there was no smoke or fire to indicate a hit on a refinery or any other oil installation.

The retaliatory raid by two Iranian aircraft was apparently aimed at oil installations near Kirkuk, from where most Iraqi oil exports originate. The Iranian air force claims to have inflicted extensive damage on targets that include the computer control centre. However, there has been no independent confirmation of the claim. Iraq says the two aircraft were driven off.

There are fears that the air strikes may escalate into large-scale attacks on civilian targets. On 13 August, Iran offered a conditional halt to "reprisal" raids. Otherwise, the War Information Headquarters warned, "Muslim combatants will destroy all vital facilities in Iraq." The Iranian cabinet met on 13 August to discuss "conditions of the war front, our strong retaliation (and) what has been done and what will be done."

It seems unlikely that Iraq will agree to stop the air raids. A key consideration is a threatened Iranian military ground offensive. The offensive is expected to be a big one, and Iraq would seem to have little choice but to try to disrupt Iran's economy, as well as its military plans.

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CSO: 4600/523

IRAN

OPPOSITION PAPER CITES FACTORS 'THREATENING REGIME'

Physicians' Strike

London KEYHAN in Persian 31 Jul 86 p 6

[London KEYHAN weekly in Persian; founder and publisher Dr Mesbahzadeh]

[Text] The physicians' strike throughout Iran was undoubtedly not the first strike. In the very first weeks after the revolution, factories, workshops, schools, universities, and higher learning centers in the Islamic Republic were faced with some strikes. Most of these strikes were conducted by leftist groups and organizations with the hope of interpreting the Islamic revolution of Iran as a prelude to the People's revolution. There were a great number who hoped that the Islamic revolution was a "Frebruary" revolution to be followed by its "October." This would be the same as when the "February" or so-called bourgeois revolution resulted in the "October" or so-called socialist revolution after a period of a few months.

As Iranian society gradually distanced itself from the left's ideological and political views, these strikes became more limited. At this time, the mullah's regime ordered all its political adversaries who had been former partners to decamp and it became the sole galloper. No organized strikes occurred any more in order not to compete with the regime. If any strike occurred, it was crushed while it was still in its fetal stage. Therefore, the physicians' strike was the first organized strike in the Islamic Republic after 7 years. But this strike does not have any political color. If to some extent it has developed a political meaning, it is because the regime has made it look political. Otherwise, physicians would be the last professional group to politically challenge the regime. In fact, contrary to Khomeyni's first remarks that "if the physicians would like to leave, let them leave" and "the hell if they leave," there was a kind of peaceful coexistence between the Medical Board Association and the entire regime of the Islamic Republic. The relatively small number of remaining physicians in Iran placed their services at the disposal of the country and regime and in exchange, they were given the privileges that were denied to even those classes considered desirable by the regime.

But parallel to this more or less "peaceful coexistence", there was an evident struggle between the Medical Board Association on one side and the Ministry of Health on the other side for control of the country's drug and medical affairs. What made this affair more complex was that this power struggle was set within the framework of the campaign pitting the different wings of the regime against each other.

Government efforts to use the Medical Board in order to gain control was of no avail. Of 16,000 physicians, the regime was able to gather only 3,000 in the Islamic Physicians Association. The last election of the Medical Board Association was a degrading defeat for the Ministry of Health.

The Ministry of Health which was defeated in these efforts, tried to initiate a propaganda war and introduce the Medical Board Association and so-called "Taquti" physicians as responsible for the shortage of medicine and the shameful curative and public health conditions of the nation. By dividing the physicians into "devout" and "money makers", the Ministry of Health intended to create a division among them and explode the Medical Board internally. But the Medical Board neutralized all these maneuvers through coolness and patience.

Finally, there was no other way for the Ministry of Health except to present a bill to the Majlis and do the same thing to the Medical Board that the bill of the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education did to the universities. This was the spark which provoked the fire of the physicians protest and resulted in a 24 hour strike.

Finally, the "benevolent serving" government showed its hand, meaning that based on an unclear law or right, it unilaterally decided to dissolve the Board of Directors of the Medical Board Association in Tehran and small provinces. As the Medical Board is a union association, the government does not have the right to interfere with it. The physicians had not intended to give a political meaning to their strike. But in a regime where to dress, laugh and look has political meaning, how could the physicians' strike be free from political meaning?

Is it the prime minister's business to appoint a director for the Medical Board? Is it the Minister of Interior's business to give a warning to the physicians? These are questions that the Islamic government does not have answers for. Because of this, the first organized union strike in the Islamic Republic will be registered as a turning point in the history of national resistance in front of the regime's obstinacy.

People's Discontent

London KEYHAN in Persian 31 Jul 86 p 6

[London KEYHAN weekly in Persian; founder and publisher Dr Mesbahzadeh]

[Text] Last week, Ayatollah Montazeri again announced that the regime is in danger and he asked the hezbollah and other groups to avoid annoying and inconveniencing the people. According to INRA, Montazeri also discussed these matters in a meeting with a group of the regime's responsible authorities. Certainly, Montazeri has set forth these subjects at a time when Khoeniha, the chief prosecutor, has asked the hezbollah to confront those with improper hejab attire, whether men or women, and punish them. Every now and then in confessing to some of the mistakes and wrongdoings of a regime that he is one of the founders of, Ayatollah Montazeri tries to play the role of guardian of peace for the people. It is evident that if these words came from the mouth of a student or employee, if he were not hanged, at least he would share the Ayatollah's prison. But this sublime theocrat is permitted to open the safety door of the boiler for a second in order to first comfort these people, who according to Montazeri, moan and cry out from excessive affliction and suffering, and in the later stage, while the people's hatred for the leaders of the Islamic Republic along with their anger culminates day after day, he acquires national popularity for the future of his regime.

At the instant when the fall of those regimes with shaky foundations is anticipated, many of the regime's pioneers always contemplate separating their account from others. We have seen these instances in Iran and abroad. These people usually forget that when a nation becomes disgusted with a regime, it does not make any difference to them whether Rafsanjani is more guilty than Montazeri! The judgement of the nation of Iran is based on the crystal cup of Islam that was presented to them at first with piety and generosity, but as soon as they tasted the first drop of the contents of this crystal cup, they realized that there was nothing in the cup but deadly poison.

Based on this impression, although the bitterness and sweetness of Montazeri has the advantage that it can be used as reliable grounds by which to discredit the regime in due course, undoubtedly in the vacuum of discrediting the regime, no privileges will be given to Montazeri. How can Ayatollah Montazeri with 3 or 4 very shallow criticisms expect the nation of Iran to forget that it was this very same Ayatollah with the rank of speaker of the Assembly of Experts who approved the shameful principal of theocratic rule and it was he who described the judgements of the revolutionary courts as "divine" and "necessary".

Today, when Montazeri complains about the harshness and treachery of a group of officials and the corruption and bribe-taking of others, apparently he has forgotten that he appointed half of these officials to their present positions. On the other side, all the tragic events and calamity in Lebanon and the Persian Gulf states has been exported to these countries by the office of revolutionary export and the house of sublime theocrats.

How does the probable successor of Ayatollah Khomeyni expect the people to accept him with the title of the Islamic "Ghandi" and great guardian of peace? It is too late for the regime to talk like this and Montazeri's words are like a drop of permanganate in a pail of water. Although the water is not pure anymore, with this drop its color and taste will be the same. Continuation of this talk can only defame the regime more than ever and in any case, increases the regime's damage.

IRAN

AFGHAN ISLAMIC LEADERS HOLD NEWS CONFERENCE

LD301910 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 30 Aug 86

[Text] This afternoon in a news conference attended by domestic and foreign correspondents, 11 leaders of Islamic Afghan parties and groups discussed their views about various issues of the Islamic Revolution in Afghanistan. [place not given]

According to a report by our correspondent, a SUNNI Party leader in Afghanistan condemned the eighth round of Geneva talks with the USSR--the regime ruling over Afghanistan and Pakistan. He refuted any attempts at political settlement of the Afghan issue prior to departure of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan, and urged unity for all Islamic forces in Afghanistan.

Another participant in the conference noted the eighth session of the Nonaligned Movement states considered as contrary to the aspiration of the movement, the participation of the subservient regime ruling over Afghanistan and asked for the presence of representatives of the Muslim people of Afghanistan in the movement.

In response to our correspondent's question about the outcome and goals of the eighth round of talks in Geneva, a leader of another Islamic Afghan group called the talks a plot by the arrogance designed to extinguish the flames of the Islamic revolution in Afghanistan. He said that the objective behind these talks, which are held without representatives from the Muslim nation of Afghanistan, is to show the Islamic revolution in Afghanistan as a dependent entity. The USSR, after 7 years of aggression without success while 85 percent of Afghanistan remains under the control of the Islamic forces, is trying to justify its defeat by attributing it to interference by foreign countries. It is attempting to find a way out for its beleaguered forces by talking to representatives of foreign countries. He added that we condemn these talks. We will never accept the probable outcome of these talks between the enemies of the Afghan nation. The Afghan nation and the Islamic Afghan groups demand the unconditional evacuation by the USSR, reparations for war and aggression, trial of those responsible for crimes and mass killings in Afghanistan, freedom and independence for Afghanistan and the realization of the demands by Afghan nation. We will continue our struggles until the final victory and reaching these lofty goals.

/9738

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IRAN

SHAH'S SON, EX-PREMIER OPTIMISTIC ABOUT COUNTRY'S FUTURE

London KEYHAN in Persian 31 Jul 86 pp 1, 3

[London KEYHAN weekly in Persian; founder and publisher Dr Mesbahzadeh]

[Text] During the course of its history, the nation of Iran has surpassed many of these events.

Freedom and security will be established in Iran very soon under the auspicious orders of the Iranian constitution.

On the anniversary of the Iranian constitutional revolution, 5 August, Reza Pahlavi, Shah of Iran, announced in a message that the activities of the freedom seekers inside Iran are increasing everyday. Individuals and different groups in society are regularly joining the ranks of these freedom seekers.

In his message, Reza Pahlavi made this reference: "I and the combatants for the country with the agreement of freedom seeking politicians have not remained idle for a second in our efforts for victory for the nation of Iran. Let us all use our loftiness as victory is near.

"Dear Compatriots, In all the eras of mankind's existence, there has been war between God and satan, light and darkness, freedom and despotism, knowledge and ignorance, and justice and oppression.

"The traces of all these continuous wars are plenty and noticeable throughout the ancient history of our country. The transformation of the society and the conditions of each period and place has ascertained the shape of this war. More than a hundred years ago, when the nation of Iran was burning in the fire of despotism, ignorance, oppression and corruption, freedom loving Iranians acquainted with the advanced ideas of that era began thinking about demolishing the foundation of despotism and establishing a democracy based on the system of the free and advanced world at that time.

"The freedom lovers of that era organized the first secret society. Because of the extent of illiteracy, superstition and the absence of communications equipment, this campaign continued almost 30 years until the people became acquainted with the word constitution and demanded it. A group of scholars,

intellectuals, politicians, merchants, heads of tribes and enlightened clergy who were interested in the people's affairs took their leadership at hand and parallel to the culmination of the revolutionary flames, other groups rapidly broke away from the despotic apparatus and joined the constitutionalists and the constitutional revolution became victorious.

"In its outmost simplicity, the constitutional slogan was meaningful. The people shouted for and demanded a court of justices and a Majlis in order for their representatives to pass laws, observe the activities of government, eradicate the roots of despotic rules, and save the people from the kindred and oppressed rule of the aggressor and seemingly-fundamentalist clergy.

"Under the sanction of the constitution's laws, the freedom of the nation of Iran was obtained from oppression, corruption, and the despotic rule of the ignorant ruler. The most effective group resisting the constitutional revolution and demands of the nation of Iran were the seemingly-fundamentalist clergy, who in the name of pleading for legitimacy, began activities by spreading superstition. Even though the power of this group was defeated through the efforts and aspiration of the freedom seekers and the decree of the clear-sighted clergy, their survivors owed the flourishing of their activities to the atmosphere of ignorance and superstition which did not remain idle. Today, it has been over 7 years that by usurping the government, they are busy destroying all the manifestation of progress and development and are savagely and revengefully devastating the country.

"The thick report card of this government shows nothing but plunder, massacre, torture and imprisonment, war and desolation, spreading of superstition and preference of death to life, onerous prices, the economic bankruptcy of the nation and mourning and grief. Those who issued a decree in 1966 against the women's right to vote calling it contrary to Islamic doctrine and created riots in the cities, today issue a decree to compulsively send women to the war fronts. They do not consider the women's captivity and its consequences in the hands of the enemy adverse to Islamic chastity and religious law.

"Those who called economics only for the animals in their lectures, today have involved Iran and the people of Iran in such economic chaos that even the most primary daily necessities are unobtainable.

"After the fall of this government, it will take a long time of work and effort in order to eliminate all these adversities. Those who speak about Muslim unity have propagated the shadow of fear through terroristic plots, not only over the heads of the Muslim nations but all the nations of the world and have made the world seek a serious solution to terrorism. They have been unable to protect the national interest or reach an honorable peace accord and day after day, draw beloved Iran towards a devastating abyss.

"During the campaign before constitutional rule, the nation of Iran was not aware of world affairs due to the lack of public communication and the path of the freedom fighters was long and it took a long time to fulfill their efforts, but today, due to the expansion of education during constitutional rule and the improvement of communications equipment, even the people in the

most remote villages of the country are informed of events and changes. This is the very same awareness that has made the nation of Iran think about escaping oppression, ignorance, and superstition and return to democracy, order and security.

"The nation of Iran desires freedom, security, and national sovereignty under the auspices of constitutional order and the establishment and respect for constitutional laws and we will attain all of these very soon.

"I and the combatants far from the country with the agreement of freedom seeking politicians, will not remain idle even for a second in our efforts toward the path of victory for the nation of Iran. In the course of its history, the nation of Iran has honorably overcome many of these bitter events. Through awareness of the expansion of the activities of the freedom seekers inside the country and the successive annexation of the people and the different groups of the society to the lines of the freedom seekers, the hopes of all us increase daily. Let us use all our efforts and loftiness since victory is very near.

'God Protect Iran'

For the occasion of the 5 August (Mordad 14) anniversary of the constitution of Iran, Dr. Ali Amini addressed a message to the nation of Iran. In this message, Dr. Amini announced that the constitutional revolution of Iran will become fruitful at a time when all the social groups meaning the intellectuals, merchants, unions, literate clerics and the tribes put aside their differences and become united in order to attain their main goal. It is important to learn a lesson from this experience and follow our goal. The constitution of constitutional government has established the duty of the monarch, independent forces and the three powers: legislative, executive and judicial. In order to continue their invasion, the fundamentalist mullah collaborated with despotic partisans and tyrant rulers and in the name of legitimate and religious laws, did everything in their power against constitutional government, but finally they were defeated by the power of the nation. Now, unfortunately after over 70 years of defeat, such a situation has been created again and rule is in the hands of the survivors and followers of the same fundamentalist, ignorant and assumed clerics. They are getting revenge for 70 years of defeat in 7 years from the nation of Iran. The people of Iran both inside the country and abroad have acquired bitter and precious experiences during this time and today, more than any other time, have become united in order to save Iran.

"At my present age without any overambition, I hope that through the efforts of you countrymen, we will all witness the elimination of corruption and despotism and the appearance of freedom. Come and let us use all our efforts and determination in order to create harmony and the necessary movement towards this goal.

"Long live Iran and the people of Iran."

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IRAN

RELEASE OF PHYSICIANS DEMANDED BY AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

London KEYHAN in Persian 1 Aug 86 pp 3, 9

[London KEYHAN weekly in Persian; founder and publisher Dr Mesbahzadeh]

[Text] Amnesty International has sent a statement to Tehran demanding the release of the physicians. Amnesty International has also asked other organizations if they have not yet taken any measures in this regard, to ask Tehran to immediately and unconditionally release the physicians.

During their imprisonment they should be treated like human beings.

Amnesty International's statement has been sent to the following officials: Mir Hoseyn Musavi, the prime minister, 'Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, minister of interior, 'Ali Reza Marandi, minister of health and the diplomatic missions in Iran. Amnesty International has included the addresses and telex numbers of the above in its statement in order for medical organizations, non-political international organizations and interested people to express their ideas to them.

In this manner, Amnesty International has begun an all-sided international campaign of support for the Iranian physicians. In its weekly publication, Amnesty International has mentioned other cases of persecution and execution of Iranians in the Islamic Republic as follows: "According to official news, 500 people were executed in Iran during the first six months of 1986. But the number of those executed is several times more than reported by the Islamic Republic."

In mentioning several instances of men and women being stoned to death, Amnesty International has warned the Islamic Republic to refrain from killing people in such a savage manner. According to the Amnesty International report, a number of other detainees in the Islamic Republic's prisons are scheduled to be stoned to death.

A show of strength continues between Islamic Republic officials and the Iranian physicians continues. Last week, as the 28th and 29th of July and the previously announced 72 hour strike by the Iranians physicians approached, the waves of arrests and harassment rose in Esfahan and Tehran. Some groups affiliated with the hezbollah demonstrated and demanded that the striking

physicians be punished. Over 14,000 Iranian physicians present in the country and a group of chemists and nurses participated during the strike of 23 June. Despite this, the Islamic Majlis ratified the government bill regarding the Medical Board Association.

The publication of the text of this bill indicates that the Islamic Republic has complete executive and union power over the Medical Board under its control. This is something that the regime was not able to accomplish in the past several years through the election of its people to the Board of Directors of the Medical Board Association. The text of the bill, which was published in the previous issue of KEYHAN, indicates that 9 of the 15 members of the Board of Directors are to be appointed by the government. The president of the Board of Directors is among these 9 people and the physicians can only elect the remaining 6 persons.

Soon after the publication of the text of the new Medical Board bill, Dr Manafi, the former minister of health who has been appointed by the prime minister to be director of the Medical Board, used his efforts to prove that the new sanctioned Medical Board bill is the same as the previous bill and said: "The only difference is that at the center of the Medical Board, a high council of the Medical Board will be established consisting of the following members: Two physicians selected by the minister of health, 4 physicians selected by the presidents of the medical schools, the director of the Military Health Department, the director of the Revolutionary Guards Corps Health Department, the national director of the Legal Medical Department and 6 physicians including one dentist, one laboratory specialist and one chemist to be selected by the Board of Directors of the Medical Boards of the townships."

Previously, all the members of the Board of the Medical Board were selected in elections held by the physicians. This time, the majority of the members of the Board of Directors of the Medical Board will be appointed by the government and its dependent organizations. Despite all this, Dr Manafi was determined to prove that there is no difference between this bill and the previous bill.

Dr Manafi's Attack on the Physicians of Iran

Dr Manafi, who was aware that the Iranian physicians would not accept his childish reasons, insisted that the physicians' strike and protest is not because of the sanctions of the new Medical Board bill. He resorted to threats and intimidation and stated: "The central nucleus of the strike and other movements was established inside the Medical Board and they were also standing in line from the outside and they want to fulfill their inauspicious purposes in the name of all the physicians. Their only excuse was the new bill of the Medical Board."

The appointed director of the Medical Board then talked officially about the arrest and detention of a group of physicians and said: "These individuals have been identified and arrested and their files are being studied by intelligence, security and judicial authorities." He continued his threats

and said: "At present around 2000 unauthorized physicians have opened offices in Tehran. These individuals have been identified and they will be prevented from practicing in Tehran."

The new director of the Medical Board then attacked one of the infamous physicians of Iran called Dr Ahari who had made a name for himself by making herbal medicine and is an active member of the Medical Board and active in the physicians' strike and said: "Without obtaining a permit, this physician was selling his own brand of medicine; I demand charges against this imposter."

In this interview and his later interviews, Dr Manafi did not stop threatening and insulting his colleagues and these insults to the Medical Board are still continuing by the other authorities of the Islamic Republic regime.

Meanwhile, a group of people and societies supported the protest and physicians' strike and issued statements in this regard.

The Society for Defending the Freedom and Sovereignty of the Nation of Iran, established by Engineer Bazargan and his friends, in a statement entitled "In View of the Events of the Medical Board and the Illegal Government Reaction" published in Tehran writes: "A dispute has been going on for sometime between the nation's Medical Board in regard to the new method for administering the Medical Board Association. This dispute clearly showed its face during the elections for the Board of Directors in 1984. In this election, the present Board of Directors succeeded in obtaining the majority of the votes of the physicians and some of the candidates had several thousand votes. The votes of the physicians belongs to the ruling government party were much less and at the maximum did not exceed more than a few hundred. This event resulted in the government introducing a bill to the Majlis. According to this bill, the majority of the Board of Directors of the Medical Board are to be unanimously appointed by the government and its related organizations and the elected physicians will be a minority. The government bill was discussed in the Majlis and most of the physicians of the country protested this bill." In this statement published in Tehran, a copy of which was received by KEYHAN, the Society for Defending the Freedom and Sovereignty of the Nation of Iran refers to this question: "None of the recommendations by the physicians for the correction of this bill were accepted and the speaker of the Majlis did not even give them an appointment to come and discuss their views and their requests with the speaker in order to inform the Majlis."

Prime Minister Insults Physicians

This statement then refers to the physicians' strike and the strong reaction by the officials of the Islamic Republic and writes: "The protesting physicians success in a one day shut down caused the severe reaction of the regime and its related agents and in their various statements, they called the physicians counter-revolutionaries and foreign agents and . . ."

In a very repulsive tone, the prime minister also called the protesting physicians materialist counter-revolutionaries who have sold their social and professional dignity to the oppressor and American values and concessions.

Then he illegally dissolved the Board of Directors of the Medical Board and appointed the former minister of health as the Director of the Medical Board. The former minister also does not refrain from insulting his colleagues. It seems that the ruling regime thinks that through the use of abusive language and insults it can suppress the loud voices of protest and legitimize its illegal activities.

The statement of the Society for Defending the Freedom and Sovereignty of the Nation of Iran has condemned the illegal action of the government against the Medical Board Association and requested an explanation from the government about dissolving the Board of Directors of the Medical Board and the appointment of the former minister of health as new director of the Medical Board. They have asked: "Is there any law depriving this country's people of the right to protest or strike? Is the answer to the people's legal protests intimidation, accusation and unjust charges?"

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IRAN

TEHRAN CITES MUSAVI-ARDEBILI ON LEGAL ISSUES

LD012346 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 1 Sep 86

[Text] The president of the Supreme Court of the country, Musavi-Ardebili, in an interview given to the correspondents, referred to the Imam of the Ummah's speech and said: In a part of his speech, His Excellency the Imam said that speakers and writers should take care not to weaken the government and government institutions, which will result in a weakening of Islam and the revolution. In this respect, we have sufficient laws and will deal with such persons without any hesitation. Courts and prosecutors' offices should deal decisively with such cases. He added: Writers, whoever they might be, should not exceed their legal and religious duties otherwise, a bill of indictment might be issued on them and then legal institutions will act. Even if there are not indictments issued, offices of prosecutors can follow up the issue.

Regarding this year's Hajj pilgrimage, he said: It should be admitted that the conditions with regard to the various affairs of the pilgrims and convoys were very good this year. The only worrying points are that the Saudi Government does not give certain sects much freedom, which causes problems. He added: Unfortunately, in Saudi Arabia those who are not member of the Vahhabi sect will face problems. He then referred to the destruction of some religious buildings and said: This is unfortunately going on in Saudi Arabia, which is gradually destroying religious relics. But developments should not result in destruction of such buildings.

The president of the Supreme Court referred to the circular in connection with a pardon granted to prisoners which was recently issued by the supreme judicial council. He said: This circular will cover many people and pardons will be granted all through the year. Those who are eligible will be pardoned. Regarding the bill of law on the punishment of hoarders and profiteers, he said: The bill is not thorough and should be attended to.

Pointing to the war, Mr Musavi-Ardebili said: Recently we began opening judicial bureaus in War Relief Headquarters and hope that legal problems of these headquarters and the combatants will be rectified by the guidelines provided by the said bureaus. The president of the Supreme Court said: The issue of laws in the country is related to the problem of land ownership and

as long as the land ownership laws have not been ratified the problems of big landowners and their activities will remain unsolved.

Finally, he referred to the evacuation of some rented schools and said: These evacuation are not against the law and we made some recommendations when the law was being ratified. Unfortunately, the laws are such that these problems have not been solved.

/8309

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IRAN

PEOPLE TO BE WATCHED AT HOME BY MOSQUE-APPOINTED AGENTS

London KEYHAN in Persian 31 Jul 86 p 5

[London KEYHAN weekly in Persian; founder and publisher Dr Mesbahzadeh]

[Excerpt] New increased pressure on the people is underway in the Islamic Republic.

The officials and different organizations are not yet satisfied with the control of the people in the streets, alleys and public and semi-private circles. In an interview with RESALAT newspaper published in Tehran, Hojatt ol-Eslam Rahbar, head of the Islamic Propaganda Organization who is in charge of determining the extent and limitations of the laws in regard to the unlawful action and annoyance of the people, in a significant expression demanded that arrangements should be made so that the people are kept under surveillance inside their homes so that the principles of Islam are not violated.

The interesting and imaginary story "1984" by George Orwell, the English writer, written at the beginning of the 20th century, has found a complete and real situation at the end of the 20th century. They have advanced so far that precautions have to be taken so that a female university student does not go to the mountains with her male classmate to study, since, especially according to Rahbar, these days, the mountains have become the location of counter-revolutionary activities.

The other point is the question of men's clothing. A number of men appear in public with short sleeve shirts, open collars and adornments that tempt the opposite sex. A circular has been issued for government offices and organizations and meanwhile they have asked the women to observe Islamic apparel. They have also bound the men to observe proper and correct attire and refrain from wearing short sleeve shirts, open collars and tight pants. Therefore, those men who do not observe the Islamic attire will be pursued and questioned.

In regard to athletes uniforms, he indicates: "In sport films on television, the bodies of male athletes appear with improper and short pants during exercise and wrestling. I explicitly state here that it is not proper for Islamic television to televise athletics in this manner."

"Placing a number of men and women strangers against each other in public transportation like buses is immoral and against religious laws. Even in Saudi Arabia, which based on its being Arab nationalist, is under the domain of America, there is distance between man and woman on the buses. Therefore, the proper authorities of the Vahed Bus Company must take the question of the distance between men and women on the buses seriously."

Hojatt ol-Islam Rahbar added: "The existence of 1000 patrol cars to fight corruption cannot solve these problems. How can one of these limited resources control streets, alleys, quarters, different locations, mountains, parks, movie theatres and other centers and homes? In each mosque, a force of 50 pious, revolutionary agents should be selected and these agents under the leadership of a capable and experienced supervisor, should watch and control the causes of corruption in the quarters, streets, alleys and regions. The formation of these groups is under preparation."

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IRAN

ABSENCE OF FREEDOM OF PRESS NOTED

London KEYHAN in Persian 31 Jul 86 p 7

[London KEYHAN weekly in Persian; founder and publisher Dr Mesbahzadeh]

[Text] Everyone is talking about the absence of freedom of thought and expression of opinion in the Islamic Republic but not about those responsible for the elimination of freedom.

Engineer Sahabi: Conditions worsen everyday and the stability of the Islamic Republic becomes shaky. A group is busy negating and neutralizing Montazeri's words.

Nearly 7 years have passed from the siege of AYANDEGAN and the arrest of 13 of its writers and editorial staff to the threat to shut down the RESALAT newspaper. This time period is not long at all and is like the wink of an eye in the life and ups and downs of a country and nation. The importance of this subject is that the transmission stage of the Islamic revolution, which in the beginning started with the slogan of freedom, has now reached a complete deadlock.

It was 7 August 1979, a hot summer day, when armed people surrounded the AYANDEGAN printing house and ordered the employees dismissed. But the employees took refuge behind the wheels of their cars. Another armed group took 13 of the editorial staff of the newspaper with them. Over the next days, they prevented anyone from entering the newspaper office.

This was the first official and calculated attack by the Islamic regime on the press after all the revolution's gains. After this, it was the kind of attack that was repeated behind the scenes. At that time, AYANDEGAN had the largest circulation of any free newspaper and was shut down by the attack. Then the hezbollah, with the help of the Tudemembuss, occupied KEYHAN.

Pens were broken and locks put on mouths. The Minister of Guidance proudly announced in the Islamic Majlis that he had closed 1400 newspapers and publications since the beginning of the Islamic revolution. This was something that the people and the revolutionaries had not imagined

encountering so soon. After that, through the strangulation of the press and the monopolization of all the executive centers, they started making decisions for the people behind closed doors.

The spring and summer of 1979 was an indicator of the efforts by the ruling power for the abolition of all freedom. The protest walk against closing the newspapers, the women's protest walk against wearing the imposed veil and the gathering of political groups were all suspended by the attack of the hezbollah groups. Even the Tudeh party and other 100 percent supporters of the Islamic Republic did not remain portionless. They shut down the writer's syndicate, the ministry of justice lawyers' syndicate and the latest is the dissolution of the Board of Directors of the Medical Board Association. Seven years have passed from the day that AYANDEGAN, the independent and free newspaper was closed until today, when a new newspaper with a small circulation called RESALAT connected to a group of Majlis deputies and the teachers of the Theological School of Qom is threatened with closing. Now we have reached the point where the books and tapes of Dr Shari'ati are being censored and becoming restricted and a gathering held in Tabriz a few days ago to talk about Dr Shari'ati was attacked by a group called the Islamic Society and dispersed. All this indicates that the Islamic regime does not have a humane fulcrum of reliance and cannot tolerate any opposing voice. It cannot even tolerate a semblance of an opposing group connected to itself.

It was a month ago that Hashemi Rafsanjani, speaker of the Islamic Majlis, addressed the editorial staff of the RESALAT newspaper with a daily circulation of 10,000 and said: "The administrators of the newspaper are connected to the theological centers and the top officials of the government, but nevertheless, if they continue with their opposing voices, their newspaper will be closed."

The Islamic Republic's arrival at a deadlock is expressed by Ayatollah Montazeri through his severe criticism of the existing newspapers in the Islamic Republic and criticism of various organizations. He has said that the press copies each other and stated: "It is better not to write praises all the time; write some criticism too." Although this expression indicates the sorrowful state of freedom in the Islamic Republic, with attention to the press bill, it is more like making a twisted face than a directive by a high ranking official. In principal, the meaning of the press bill sanctioned by the Majlis is strangulation. For example, in this bill, it is considered an insult if a writer criticizes a Majlis deputy and the writer will be sentenced to two years in prison.

In its recent issues, the Tehran KEYHAN newspaper has conducted a survey in regard to freedom, expression and the spread of opinion by officials and those connected with the Islamic Republic. The published sample of opinions and views of some of these people could indicate that after 7 years of invasion and the negation of any kind of freedom, they are now looking for a way to escape the deadlock they created, but alas, it is too late and in vain!

Ayatollah Azari Qomi, a representative of the Majlis and member of the Theological Center of Qom, who in the first months of the revolution as the Public Prosecutor of the Islamic Revolution took measures to close the newspapers and arrest newspaper writers, now states: "Those involved in press work must spread ideas even if this task is very difficult, even if they do not approve of some of the ideas, and even if they consider them contrary to the interests of the Islamic society."

Ayatollah Azari Qomi is presently publisher of RESALAT newspaper. It is said that he publishes the views of the Hojjatieh and the groups connected to the theological centers of Qom and the bazaar. In response to the KEYHAN survey in regard to the expression of opinions he states: "Some believe that the revolution is the main thing and that if a certain person's idea is expressed in the society, it will damage the revolution. Therefore, they must make the people dislike such a person."

In spite of all this, Azari Qomi still cannot forget his monopoly and the group connected to him. He believes: "The freedom to publish ideas only applies to those who believe in the rule of the Islamic Republic and their views are not harmful to the society."

Engineer Ezzatollah Sahabi, a former member of the Freedom movement who held important positions in the past few years in the Islamic Republic, believes that those opposed to the freedom of expression and spreading opinions and views are the very same political and social lines which have periodically forgotten the slogans and ideals of the revolution and at times discuss deviated slogans and have focussed their main opposition on the genuine and combatant forces. He says: "There is another line inside or outside the government which is responsible for the creation of the 'banishment' atmosphere in economic and social affairs and it moves in the same direction with the primary wing and its only difference with the extremist right wing is the question of ownership."

Engineer Sahabi asks: "Why have we reached the point today where in this short time after the victory of the revolution, a personality such as Ayatollah Montazeri recommends the cleansing of the atmosphere which has filled all the levels of the society with enmity, disunion and retaliation?" Then he adds: "I am very well aware of the straitened and difficult economy, the pressures of world colonization, war, and the enormous internal administrative and judicial upheaval, but wasn't the freedom and security of the masses of people the very first demand of this nation?"

Engineer Sahabi then refers to the 7 April events of the Behesht-e Zahra when members of the Freedom Movement were taken hostage and beaten and says: "These activities and agitation are performed by a special wing. From one side, this wing uses its efforts to destroy the executive conditions of the regime in such a manner that conditions become worse day after day and the stability of the Islamic Republic becomes shaky. On the other side, behind the platforms, pulpits and sermons, they nullify and neutralize Ayatollah Montazeri and talk about excommunication, anathematize and expelling the others."

Despite all this, Engineer Sahabi still does not consider himself free in the sense of being able to talk straightforwardly and describe those wings responsible for accusations, calumny and the creation of strangulation. Their style and methods remind him of the Black and Brown Shirt Italians and Germans at the beginning of the predominance of Fascism and Nazism and he adds: "Evidently, the source of nullification of freedom and the creation of a suppressed atmosphere, calumny, slandering, divulging, intimidation and the establishment of despotic rule does not exclusively belong to this wing. There are also other lines which are responsible for creating a suppressed and disintergrated atmosphere and the establishment of despotic rule which moves along with the primary wing."

In this survey, Jalal Rafi'i, writer and member of the Islamic Republic's Educational Council, is sorry that the press and publications do not perceive each other and are cruel and unfair to each other. Mohammed Javad Sahebi, a writer in charge of KEYHAN Andisheh, believes that there is selfcensorship and other censorship in the press. Finally, Dr Qolam'Abbas Tavasoli, a professor in the College of Social Science says: "Idiotic and extravagant gatherings and assemblies are creating a false atmosphere and fear of the collision of opinions in the press and even the universities." He added: "Today, a university professor cannot talk about the martyrdom of Dr Shari'ati in the university environment." Despite all this, this university professor also cannot explicitly state that these circles and idiotic extremist groups which create a false and terrified atmosphere in the newspaper and university are none other than the proper authorities of the Islamic Republic and its related organs

Finally, Dr Kazam Sami, a deputy in the first session of the Islamic Republic Majlis and former minister of health in the Islamic regime, states: "With attention to the history of regimes resulting from people's revolutions, as long as these regimes enjoyed the support of the masses, they have been damaged to a lessor degree. But when they have been faced with the estrangement and heedlessness of the masses, their entity has been endangered and they have been toppled." He expressed hope that by acting according to the recommendations in regard to the execution of the principal of freedom and spreading and expressing opinions, the regime will be able to lead the closed and extremist atmosphere to moderation and insight.

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IRAN

REGIME TO APPLY RELIGIOUS REGULATIONS FOR MEN'S WEAR

London KEYHAN in Persian 24 Jul 86 p 15

[London KEYHAN weekly in Persian; founder and publisher Dr Mesbahzadeh]

[Text] It is inviolable for men to cover their chests--wearing short sleeves compels women to commit sin.

These days, the Islamic Republic has made men's wear the issue of the day. Some groups from the Islamic propaganda committees have been assigned to execute the order guiding the people to do what is laid down by religious law. A number of people have also been assigned to answer the people's questions during sermons in the Majlis and mosques regarding the guidelines for men's wear and the punishment for improper men's wear.

What you read below are explanations by Hojatt ol-Eslam Qorbani, the representative of Astaneh Ashrafieh in the Majlis, in connection to the people's telephone contact with the Majlis deputies. These telephone conversations are quoted verbatim from issue number 2297 of the weekly ETTELA'AT magazine.

Hojatt ol-Eslam Qorbani, the representative of Astaneh Ashrafieh in a telephone conversation with the people.

The Religious Guidelines for Men's Wear

Question: Hello! I have a question for your eminence.

Qorbani: Go ahead.

Question: "I want to know what the religious guidelines are for men's wear in the Islamic Society? Can a man wear a short sleeve shirt in the street? In a publication, the Imam's office stated that there is no objection to short sleeve shirts for men."

Answer: "If the short sleeve shirt tempts women to sin, it is objectionable. Definitely, covering one's private parts is an absolute requirement. Besides covering the private parts, if the other parts of the naked body tempt the women and cause them to sin, covering the rest of the body also becomes essential. This means that if the naked chest of a man attracts the interest of the women, it is necessary for the man to cover his chest."

Question: "Sir, how can one tell if the woman is tempted or not?"

Answer: "That should be asked from the women: In the same manner that man becomes tempted by a woman, the women also become tempted."

Question: "Then in this case, the men should also cover themselves."

Answer: "Certainly!"

Question: "Thank you very much."

Unsuitable Encounter

Question: "Hello! In the name of the campaign against improper or bad clothing, a number of brothers encounter people in any way they desire. Will you kindly explain the guidelines for improper clothing for the people so that they realize for example, what are the clothing guidelines for a 60 year old man? Why is a tie improper for a man? At present, our foreign guests also wear ties."

Answer: "Wearing a tie is not improper."

Question: "Then why do they cut the people's ties with scissors? One of the physicians has even left Iran because of a tie! Will you kindly explain the guidelines for improper men's wear, for example, what is wrong with a short sleeve shirt?"

Answer: "If the short shirt tempts the women to sin, then it must not be worn."

Question: "Yes, if it is tempting, but in your view, how can a 60-year-old man's elbow tempt a woman?"

Answer: "Well, in this case I do not know."

Question: "Anyway, please explain those things that cause improper clothing. What are the guidelines?"

Answer: "I will talk to the director of the campaign against unlawful acts in this regard."

Question: "Thank you very much!"

The Extent of Men's Wear

Question: "Hello. Last week, a publication asked the Imam's office a question which was published with the large title "The Guidelines for Men's Wear." That publication had certainly indicated that a man can leave the buttons of his shirt open or wear a tight shirt, even with short sleeves; what are the instructions for men in this regard?

The Imam's office had answered: "It is not necessary for men to cover themselves and it is not permissible for women to look and they must avoid looking

at men. Now, in regard to the atmosphere created in the society about the degree of men's wear, will you please give us your view point as the president of the Islamic Guidance Committee."

Answer: "I do not want to declare a religious decree because I am in charge of Islamic guidance but I can indicate that from a social and psychological view, in the same way that men become excited by seeing women in different clothes, women also become excited by men's different clothes. If men's wear such as open collars, short sleeves and other things excite women. It is objectionable and must not be done."

Question: "Now, how can a man realize whether a woman has become excited or not? In fact who should distinguish this?"

Answer: "A man can distinguish this. See, there is a time when an unfortunate, poor and frail man wears improper clothes and there is a time when a joyful, young man dresses and the hair of his chest is revealed. Well, certainly this young man will impress a woman."

Question: "Must these orders be exercised in the government organizations and offices?"

Answer: "If improper clothing causes temptations in the offices, it too must be confronted. I even think the prime minister issued an order sometime ago that men should not wear short sleeve shirts. In fact, if a certain clothing is exciting, it must not be worn."

Question: "Sir, are you aware if the relevant laws in the Islamic Republic are applicable to the Shari'a?"

Answer: "Yes!"

Question: "In regard to this question, don't you think that a law must be introduced and passed by the Majlis in order to pave the way for the disciplinary officials?"

Answer: "Maybe this is a good idea and we might be able to approve a law in this regard."

Question: "Thank you very much."

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IRAN

BRIEFS

IMPORTS VALUE DECLINE—Imports were valued at \$2,700 million in the first quarter of the Iranian year started 21 March--16 percent less than in the corresponding period of 1985, customs officials say. However, the volume of imports increased by 8 percent, to 3.35 million tons. The first-quarter figures indicate that imports could be valued at nearly \$11,000 million over the full year--well above projected oil revenues. The government has restricted imports to conserve foreign exchange, but the full effects may not be felt until later in the year. Bank Markazi (central bank) governor Mohsen Nourbakhsh said in early August that Iran is "capable of honouring all its commitments" and will not need to resort to foreign borrowing. However, he conceded that more trade—an estimated 25 percent—is being conducted on a long-term credit basis. [Text] [London MEED/THE MIDDLE EAST'S BUSINESS WEEKLY in English 16-22 Aug 86 p 10] /9274

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